Prices of milk, electricity, gasoline shoot up

Story on PAGE A2

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **RP trade surplus down** BUSINESS /B1
- **Road rage killer gives up** METRO/A17

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Attend festive meet, Pope urges Filipinos

By TJ Burgonio and Norman Bordadora

THE POPE'S representative to the World Meeting of Families arrived yesterday with a personal message from Pope John Paul II.

"I love the Philippines so much," Alfonso Cardinal Lopez Trujillo quoted the Pope as saying in his personal message to

ATTEND/ A13

VICE President Teofisto Guingona Jr., former President Corazon Aquino and President Macapagal in a moment of prayer at the Edsa Shrine during Mass marking the second anniversary of Edsa II. EDWIN BACASMAS

Sin raps Cha-cha solons but supports referendum

By Armand N. Nocum

SAYING that the people were against Charter change (Cha-cha), Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin yesterday asked members of Congress to once more heed their will.

"The surveys show that the people do not favor it," Sin said in a Mass at the Edsa Shrine marking the second anniversary of People Power II that ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Sin nevertheless called for the holding of a referendum on the proposed Charter change so that members of Congress would know the people's pulse on an issue that he described as "divisive."

"In this issue of Charter change, I appeal to our legislators to listen to the people through a referendum," Sin said.

Most members of the House of Representatives support Charter change through the convening of Congress into a constituent assembly, while most senators favor a constitutional convention (con-con) whose delegates are to be elected during the 2004 national and local elections.

Sin was the second major player of Edsa I and II to call for a referendum on proposals to amend the 1987 Constitution.

SIN/ A9

President declares war on corruption

Estrada belittles new GMA campaign

By Volt Contreras and Christine O. Avendaño

THE MAN driven out of Malacañang on corruption charges two years ago dismissed his successor's renewed declaration of war on corruption in government as mere "lip service."

But a group of opposition politicians went a step further than deposed President Joseph Estrada. They asked Congress to impeach President Macapagal-Arroyo for alleged graft and other offenses.

The petitioners, led by former Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Francisco Tatad, alleged that Ms Macapagal had "committed again and again the very same offenses for which her predecessor (Joseph Estrada) was impeached." The 18 complainants asked the House of Representatives to initiate impeachment proceedings against the President.

Already, the group is wooing members of the House to endorse the impeachment complaint, sources said yesterday.

Former Assemblyman Homobono Adaza was seen talking to congressmen at the House last night, said the sources who told the INQUIRER he appeared to be a lawyer for the People's Consultative Assembly.

ESTRADA/ A13

MEMBERS of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and other militant groups clash with anti-riot policemen who prevented them from reaching the Edsa Shrine for the Edsa II commemorative rites. DENNIS SABANGAN

Edsa spirit summoned in drive

By Dona Pazzibugan

DEFINING Edsa II as an assault on corruption, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday used the second anniversary of the People Power event that installed her in Malacañang to launch what she called a "war against corruption."

"I came to the presidency because of Edsa II. You ask, what was Edsa II? I tell you it was the most powerful answer of the weak to the corruption of the powerful," the President said in a speech after the commemorative Mass at the Edsa Shrine.

"To be faithful to the spirit of Edsa II requires a continuing commitment to the fight that was started there," she added.

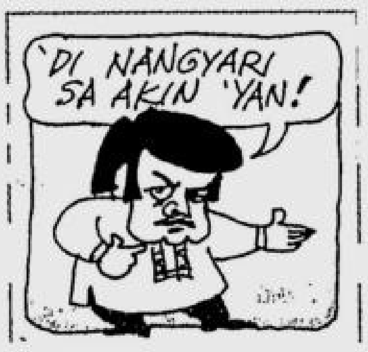
She then urged ordinary citizens to join in a national movement against corruption, and backed up her appeal by approving the use of over P3 billion to fund the campaign.

"Even as we call on the people to mobilize in the war against corruption, I will mobilize the necessary funds to increase the troop complement in our war against corruption and to acquire state-of-the-art weaponry," she vowed.

The President also:

- Allotted P2.5 billion to computerize the vote counting system, so that it will perform "quick,

PRESIDENT/ A4



'DI NANGYARI SA AKIN 'YAN!

No violent dispersal in Erap's time?

DEPOSED President Joseph Estrada is getting forgetful nowadays.

From his detention suite at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center, the ousted leader yesterday condemned the police dispersal of a protest rally at the Edsa Shrine, saying such violent clashes were unheard of "even during the lowest point of my rule when my enemies are daily resorting to unruly and unlawful acts to subvert my presidency."

Earlier Monday, police

NO VIOLENT/ A13

Cops keep militants out of Edsa II rites

By TJ Burgonio, Agnes E. Donato and Alcuin Papa

FOR LACK of a permit, militant groups that helped install President Macapagal-Arroyo into power through Edsa II two years ago were kept out of the anniversary rites.

A Mass at the Edsa Shrine, attended by Ms Macapagal and some of her Edsa II allies from the Church, civil society and government, marked the second year of the ouster of Joseph Estrada.

While Jaime Cardinal Sin was celebrating Mass, some 500 policemen were dispersing at least 1,000 members of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), PlunderWatch, Kilusang Mayo Uno and other groups several kilometers away to prevent them from reaching the Edsa Shrine.

Told that they had no permit to proceed to the shrine, members of the militant groups tried to break through a phalanx of anti-riot policemen at around 12:20 p.m.

The protesters, led by party-list Representatives Liza Maza, Satur Ocampo and Crispin Beltran of Bayan Muna and Fr. Joe Dizon of PlunderWatch, were pushed back by the shield- and stick-wielding policemen.

Dizon wondered why they were stopped from joining the Edsa II

COPS/ A13

GMA releases ₱2.5B for poll computerization

By Dona Pazzibugan and Blanche S. Rivera

THE PRESIDENTIAL election in 2004 will be fully computerized, President Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday.

The President announced at the Edsa Shrine that she had set aside P2.5 billion to finance the full computerization of the election.

"I am hereby announcing the availability of P2.5 billion to fully computerize the quick and accurate counting and tabulation of votes in the 2004 elections," she said, drawing the longest applause during her speech.

She said her legacy to the nation when she would step down in June 2004 would be "the certainty that every Filipino will see his vote counted."

"High-tech voting, this is the key to reform," she said, drawing more applause.

The President said she wanted not only to spare teachers from tedious manual counting and pressure from politicians, but al-

GMA/ A13

SHOW BIZ PROTEST

Sen. Loi Ejercito (third from left) and Rep. Imee Marcos join Phillip Salvador (left), Fernando Poe Jr., Eddie Garcia, Richard Gomez and other actors and entertainers in a rally against the implementation of the value-added tax among professionals outside the Senate building. *(See story on Page A2)* JESS YUSON

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The Eastern sections of Luzon and Visayas and the whole of Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/01/21/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FrontPage

Milk, power, gasoline prices rise

By Ron W. Domingo and Gil Cabacungan

CONSUMER prices have gone berserk, with the cost of electricity, gasoline and milk products shooting up and diesel prices sliding up and down as oil companies watch one another's moves.

The energy department yesterday warned customers of the Manila Electric Co. to expect higher electricity bills next month.

The country's leading milk producers, Nestle Phil. and Alaska Milk Corp., said they would be raising their prices by five percent this month because of rising production costs.

Fortunately for consumers, the price of another essential commodity, flour, has stabilized. Flour prices surged last year because of poor harvests in the major supplier countries.

Quoting a Meralco report to the Energy Regulatory Commission, the Department of Energy said the adjustment in electricity rates resulted from the increase in the purchased power adjustment (PPA) charge.

The PPA is an automatic adjustment mechanism under which electricity distributors like Meralco are allowed to pass on to consumers the cost of buying energy from power producers.

The increase in power rates was also blamed on lower energy consumption in December, one of the coldest months of the year.

According to the DOE, Meralco had reported that the PPA for January stood at P2.74 per kilowatt hour, or 13 centavos more than the December rate of P2.61.

The milk price hike would mean a minimum P1 increase in milk product prices, which currently range from P22.26 to P27.33 per can for evaporated and condensed filled milk and P29.33 per 180-kilogram pouch bag for powdered milk.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas said the trade department found the milk price hike acceptable as it was well within the limits set by the Price Act, which allows up to 10 percent increase in prices in a month.

He said the five percent would not even cover Nestle's and Alaska's increase in production costs.

Meralco buys its supplies from the state-owned National Power Corp. and from independent producers like First Gas Power Corp., Quezon Power Phil. and Duracom.

The DOE said Meralco's payments to the independent power producers went as high as 46.8 centavos per kWh while Napocor rates went up by a centavo because of foreign exchange fluctuations.

In a telephone interview, Energy Regulatory Commission acting chair Leticia Ibay said Meralco did not need the agency's approval for the price hike as the PPA was, by its nature, an automatic adjustment mechanism.

"Meralco submits such reports every month because the PPA naturally changes as frequently as that," Ibay said. "They inform the ERC about such changes, the ERC in turn checks their computations."

Meantime, Caltex, Seaoil and Flying V said they had increased the prices of their gasoline products by 60 centavos per liter following the lead of Pilipinas Shell Petroleum last Saturday.

Refining giant Petron Corp. confirmed it had increased its gasoline prices by 60 centavos, effective at noon yesterday.

Pilipinas Shell and Petron officials blamed the increases on the additional costs incurred to comply with the Clean Air Act. They said there would be no changes in the prices of diesel and kerosene.

A Caltex official, however, said the firm's latest price increases were partly due to the rising cost of raw materials in the world market.

"We don't want this to be seen as purely due to the Clean Air Act," the official said.

On the other hand, TotalFinaElf Philippines, Eastern Petroleum Corp. and Unioil Philippines Petroleum said they had rolled back diesel and kerosene prices after an earlier announced increase of 40 centavos per liter.

Ople paves way for Sultan's visit

FOREIGN Secretary Blas Ople left yesterday for Brunei to discuss preparations for the coming state visit of Sultan Hajji Hassanal Bolkiah and to address bilateral concerns between the two countries.

The visit is also a part of the customary courtesy undertaken by a new foreign secretary to introduce himself to his counterparts and to the heads of state of Association of Southeast Asian Nations member-countries.

Ople will meet with Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Brunei's foreign minister, before meeting with the Sultan and Crown Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah. *Norman Bordadora*

Movie stars rally against VAT but gov't remains unmoved

By Clarissa S. Batino

NOT even comedian Dolphy has managed to land in the country's top 1,000 taxpayers list despite being one of the biggest taxpayers in the entertainment industry.

In the Bureau of Internal Revenue's roster of big individual taxpayers, the top 1,000 remit hundreds of millions to billions of pesos in taxes to the government every year.

But Dolphy, one of the wealthiest and highest paid Filipino entertainers, paid less than P2.5 million in taxes in 2001.

This is one of the anomalous situations that revenue officials are trying to correct in ordering the lifting of the exemption for professionals—who include lawyers, doctors, athletes and movie stars and entertainers—from the 10 percent value-added tax.

This group has been exempted from paying the VAT since 1997. The five-year exemption expired in 2002 and entertainers and movie stars have been pressuring Congress to pass a law extending the exemption.

Big-earning entertainers and basketball players are suspected of committing rampant tax evasion through this loophole.

The government says it loses up to P8.6 billion in revenues from the VAT exemptions given to this group.

Biggest protest

Dolphy and movie star Fernando Poe Jr. yesterday led a rally of their peers and assorted professionals at the Senate—touted as one of the biggest protest gathering of entertainers since the 1983 march against the censors board—to protest the government move to impose the 10 percent VAT on them.

"If they deduct more taxes from our earnings, most of us would be forced to dismiss our drivers and assistants," said Dolphy, as his colleagues shouted "No VAT!" and took turns lambasting the government and senators for not helping them in their fight.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said the entertainers were barking up the wrong tree as he lectured the show biz folk on how a law is passed by Congress.

Drilon and Sen. Ralph Recto, the chair of the ways and means committee that will hear a resolution filed by Sen. Vicente Sotto seeking suspension of the VAT, told the entertainers there were many priority measures awaiting the Senate's action and the process could not be short-cut just to accommodate them.

Recto, who is married to movie star Vilma Santos, said he would not be bullied into acting on a bill that had yet to find its way to the Senate. The House has passed on second reading a bill to extend the VAT exemption for professionals.

Sen. Joker Arroyo said the Senate had no authority to suspend an administrative order of the finance secretary.

'Make sacrifice'

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho yesterday appealed to the entertainers and other professionals opposing the 10 percent VAT "to make a sacrifice and contribute to nation building."

He said salaried Filipinos have been taking up a disproportionate portion of the tax burden.

In 2001, P80.24 billion in total taxes were paid by individuals. Of this, P66.3 billion in taxes were paid by fixed-income earners.

Professionals whose earnings come from talent and consultancy fees remitted only P620 million in 2001, not P15 billion as earlier reported.

Camacho said the government has extended up to Feb. 28 the deadline for professionals to enlist as VAT-registered taxpayers. Without the registration, professionals will not be allowed to accept jobs that would pay them more than P550,000.

BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno said the BIR would even take the registration process to the professionals by setting up a "BIR on wheels."

Camacho and Parayno will hold a dialogue with representatives of the entertainment industry today to explain how the VAT works.

A common perception among entertainers, for instance, is that the 10 percent VAT would affect their earnings.

Camacho explained that the responsibility for paying the VAT rests primarily with broadcast networks and production outfits. These companies use the payments as input VAT to reduce their VAT obligations to the government. *With Cynthia D. Balana and Marinel Cruz*

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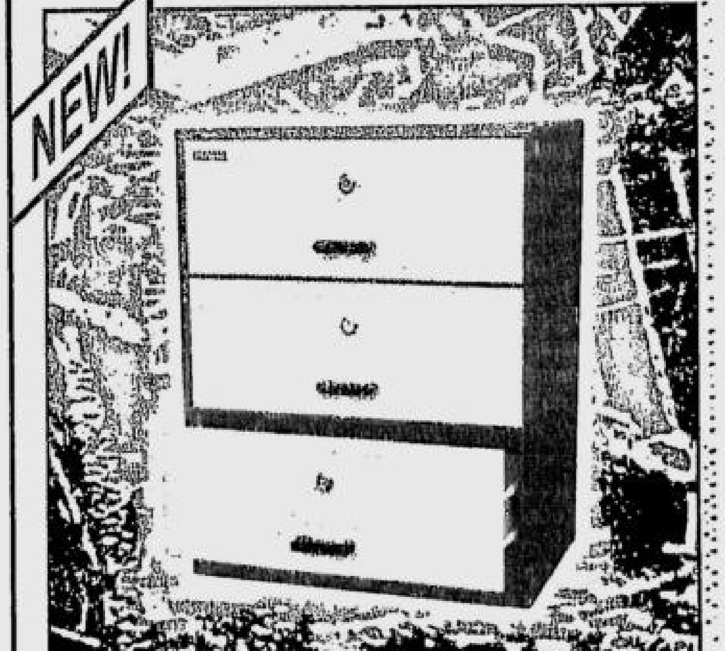

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US advance team arrives in Zambo

ZAMBOANGA CITY—An advance party of US Special Forces troops was preparing Monday for a 10-month training program for local soldiers in Mindanao as part of the US-led war on terrorism.

Capt. Steve Wollman, spokesperson for the Joint Special Operations Task Force here, said about a dozen US Special Forces troops landed here Saturday from their Okinawa, Japan, base.

They are "preparing and familiarizing themselves with everything" ahead of exercises planned to better train Philippine troops in their battle with Islamic extremists, Wollman said.

Five Special Forces teams of between 200 and 300 US troops are to arrive here in two weeks to work with 16 Philippine light infantry companies in a forested training camp on the outskirts of this port city, local officials have said.

The Zamboanga exercises, set to begin next month, are the first in a series of planned joint exercises expected to "tremendously benefit the armed forces of both countries," Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said Monday.

Tightened Philippine security in the face of "credible threats" from the Abu Sayyaf kidnap gang greeted the US troops on their arrival.

The relatively small Muslim insurgency with alleged links to the al-Qaida network is notorious for kidnapping Christian Filipinos and foreigners for hefty ransoms and is wanted for the murder of two US hostages last year.

Because of the security alerts, the US troops on Sunday were forced to cancel a trip to hand over a renovated hospital on nearby Basilan island to local authorities, military officials said. *AFP*

RP assures US of tight security at int'l ports

By Jennie L. Ilustre

WASHINGTON—Amid talk in this capital of impending war with Iraq, a top-level six-man Filipino delegation met last week with United States transportation officials on ways to safeguard the Philippines' international shipping ports against terrorists.

Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, head of the delegation, said an agreement was reached where the Philippines would monitor all ships docking at its international ports and make a listing of all passengers and cargo.

The Philippines' eight international ports are located in Batangas, Subic Bay, Manila, Cebu, Cagayan de Oro City, Davao, General Santos City and La Union.

Mendoza also announced that the Development Bank of the Philippines is providing a P30-billion loan to shipping operators to upgrade their ports. The country, composed of over 7,000 islands, has over 1,000 ports.

"All our talks with American officials centered on security measures as part of the global war against terrorism," Undersecretary for Transportation Arturo T. Valdez told the INQUIRER. "They were extremely concerned about the security of containers originating from our ports that are headed for the United States."

Mendoza said the delegation met with Deputy Secretary of Transportation Michael P. Jackson and Adm. James M. Loy, undersecretary of transportation for security administration and the US Coast Guard's director of port security, among others.

He added that Philippine officials are coordinating with their American counterparts on ports security. The Philippines chairs a committee on maritime security concerns in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, with the US as vice chair.

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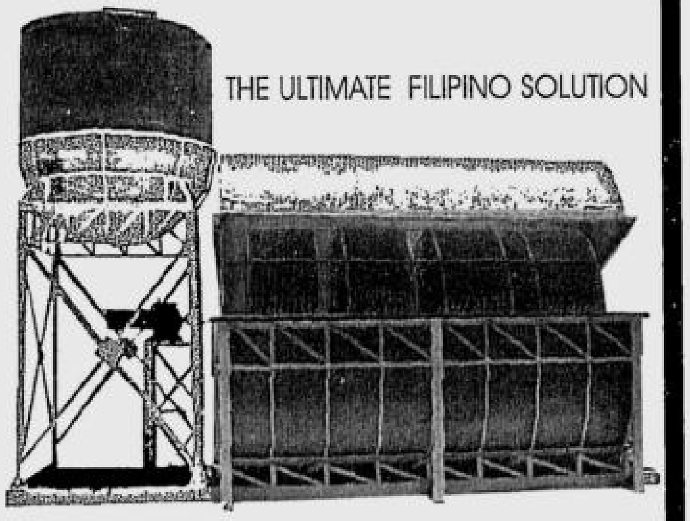

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President declares war on corruption

From page A1

accurate counting and tabulation of votes" and "ensure the election of the people's real choices." *(See story on Page A1.)*

- Urged Congress to pass the law creating the National Authority for Revenue Administration, thus transforming the BIR into an autonomous authority and allowing it to function like a corporation.
- Released P700 million to the Bureau of Internal Revenue to upgrade its information and communications technology department to allow it to run after big-time tax evaders.
- Ordered the BIR chief to terminate some 45,000 letters of authority, those tax audit orders that have been a source of corruption;
- Ordered the closure of more than 300 customs bonded warehouses notorious for smuggling.
- Released P35 million to the Ombudsman to hire 50 more lawyers and buy computers.
- Urged Congress to pass a law allowing the Ombudsman to use the services of private lawyers.
- Asked the Ombudsman to "observe" major government procurement deals and release the statements of assets and liabilities of all public officials, including presidential consultants and advisers.
- Ordered the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission to create an investigation unit to receive reports from citizens and conduct intensive lifestyle checks on public officials.

PRESIDENT Macapagal and former Education Secretary Raul Roco share light moments after the Mass in celebration of Edsa II at the Edsa Shrine.

EDWIN BACASMAS

National draft

"I am calling a national draft of all good men and women who want to make a difference in their lives and in our country," Ms Macapagal said.

But the anti-corruption drive would also cover the legislative and judiciary branches of government, as well as private individuals who bribe public officials, evade taxes and violate labor laws, she said.

"We must fight the enemy wherever he is found—even in our lives, in our work, and our business," she said.

The President avoided talking about proposals to amend the Constitution. Instead, she reiterated her vow to implement "sweeping structural reforms" which means, she said, "fighting entrenched vested interests that have stood in the way of national progress and prosperity (and) blocked the way to a better standard of living for the vast majority rather than just the same small elite."

She drew laughter when she admitted that there were still people who doubted her Dec. 30 announcement that she will not run in the 2004 elections.

"Some of my critics remain unconvinced. I leave them to their self-imposed and self-serving ignorance," she said.

"They can go on sounding the retreat, back to the vested interests that pay their way, back to the corruption that is for them the only way. For my part, I have made the sacrifice, I have sounded the advance—and there shall be no retreat."

The President dismissed suggestions she would be unable to push her reform program in the final 18 months of her tenure.

"It's true I'm going but I'm not a goner, far from it. A President without the baggage of reelection can move faster, hit harder, and work to greater effect," she said.

Wanted: Heroes

In his homily at the noon Mass, Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin said the country needed more heroes and fewer celebrities.

"The spirit of Edsa II is moral leadership by example," said the influential archbishop of Manila, who played a key role in the People Power events two years ago and also in 1986.

"The nation is in great need of heroes. We lack heroes. We have plenty of celebrities."

The youth and the children are looking for "examples to inspire them" and "icons" to imitate, he said.

"Examples of selfless service for God and country are gravely lacking in our time. The hero shows the best in ourselves," he said. "The celebrity shows the best in photo opportunities and press releases."

He then asked the people to "choose to be heroes rather than celebrities."

"If we are to live out the spirit of Edsa II, let us restrict partisan politics and political grandstanding to the election period. Away from the election period, let us unite ... The greater part of politics is the service for the common good," he said.

Sin asked the President to "focus more on politics for the poor, rather than politics for the politicians."

Camacho statement

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the President meant every word of her get-tough remarks.

"The President had been wanting to improve the BIR and Customs since Day One of her term. I think she will use a good part of her remaining months in office to achieve this," Camacho said.

Varying estimates in the past showed that corruption in the BIR deprives the government of some P200 billion to P400 billion in revenues yearly.

Camacho said the creation of the Nara was key to improving tax collection.

Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo explained that 320 bonded warehouse facilities have been ordered closed since they had not been operational in the last 12 months. Despite being inactive, these warehouses may have been used to smuggle goods into the country, Bernardo said.

About a thousand bonded warehouses, which facilitate the tax- and duty-free importation of exporters' raw materials, operate in the country. Through the years, however, companies have used bonded warehouses to handle even finished goods, thus evading tax and tariff payments.

As for the letters of authority, Camacho explained that these were like "search warrants" issued to some BIR agents to audit taxpayers suspected of failing to remit the right taxes.

But the authority, he said, had become a source of corruption. Unscrupulous agents use the letters to "extort" from taxpayers.

With reports from Armand Nocum; AP, AFP

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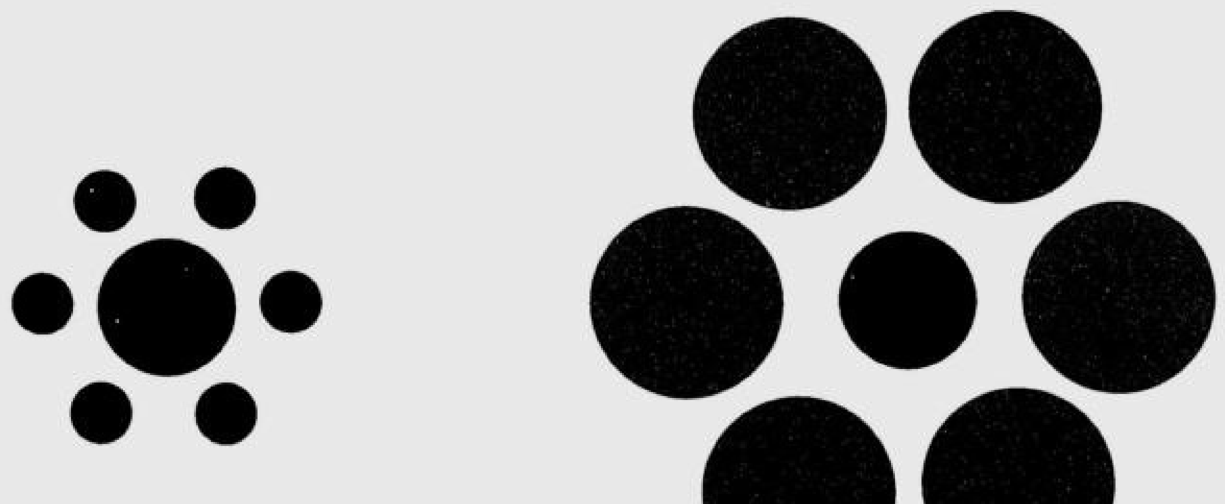

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DepEd acts on usurious loans

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The education department is trying to free the country's 450,000 teachers from a debt burden of P23.5 billion, an education official said here on Sunday.

Of the total amount, P15 billion is owed to the Government Service Insurance System and P8.5 billion to 115 allegedly usurious money lenders who collect payment through the Department of Education, said Juan Miguel Luz, DepEd undersecretary for finance and administration.

DepEd has started a program of reforms designed to help teachers out of the debt trap. This includes reviewing existing loans and setting up a provident fund and counseling program to help teachers manage their finances.

Teachers in Negros Occidental and other parts of the country have complained about the DepEd making deductions from their salaries for loans they did not make or had already paid, Luz said.

Many money lenders who collect payment through the DepEd charge as much as 48 percent in interest on loans payable in one year, he said.

"As far as we are concerned, charging 30 to 48 percent annually in interest is usurious and illegal," Luz said.

He did not discount the possibility that DepEd insiders were behind the illegal deductions.

He said the department would go after any DepEd employees found to have tie-ups with the money lenders.

To protect the teachers, the DepEd is requiring the 115 lenders to submit financial statements, income tax returns, the amounts they charge in interest, and copies of their promissory notes.

The lenders will be allowed to charge only 18 percent interest annually, or 1.2 percent a month, and asked to refund the teachers the excess interest already charged or reduce subsequent interest charges.

The GSIS will buy out the loans from companies unable to meet the new criteria and the teachers would then make their payments to the GSIS at a lower rate.

The Commission on Audit has been asked to review the loans that the teachers took out with the money lenders, he said.

The list of lenders meeting the new DepEd requirements will be released by March 30. Luz expects only about a third of the 115 lenders to pass the new criteria.

Coldest Baguio morning in years

BAGUIO CITY—Residents woke up to their coldest morning in 10 years Saturday when the temperature plunged to 8 degrees Celsius.

The chilly weather was colder than last year's 8.8 degrees Celsius recorded on Jan. 4, but was way off the record low of 6.3 degrees registered on Jan. 18, 1961.

Worst hit by the cold wave is India where hundreds of people have reportedly died.

At 9,610-ft. high Mt. Pulag in Benguet, temperatures plunged to below zero, according to mountaineers. *Gobleth Moulic, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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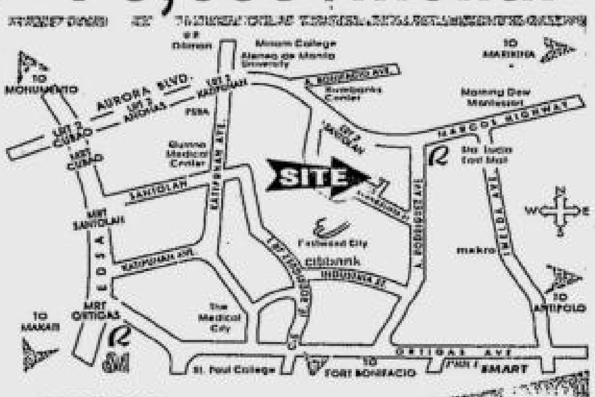

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Hero and celebrity

EDITORIAL

MA. FE Sotelo has been called "a hero" for a recent act of hers.

Sotelo who? You may ask. If you've been reading the newspapers and watching or listening to the TV and radio newscasts, you should know by now that Sotelo was the mall security guard who returned a bag containing P500,000 to its owner about two weeks ago. While doing the rounds at the Festival Mall in Alabang, she found a belt bag in the men's restroom at the basement parking lot. She immediately turned it over to her superiors who later handed it over to businessman Wang Chao Wei of Tiangxi, China. Wang offered a cash reward, but she turned it down. She did accept a porcelain flower vase as a gift from him, however.

Mike Gotianun, vice president of the Filinvest Development Corp. which runs the Festival Mall, commended Sotelo and gave her a cash reward of P5,000. Philippine National Police Chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. is waiving the PNP height and age requirements to allow Sotelo to join the force. An applicant has to be at least five feet tall and not more than 25 years old but Sotelo is less than 5 feet tall and was 32 when she applied last August.

What was so unusual about Sotelo's act? Why has her feat been considered heroic? In other countries, such as Japan, such an act would not be considered a big deal. But in our impoverished country, where the poor are getting poorer every day, and where they eat only one meal or two meals a day, it is hard for the ordinary person to fight the temptation to keep such a big amount of money. That big amount of money, P500,000, would have paid for the food, utilities and other necessities of a family of five for more than a year.

Sotelo was made of sterner stuff than the ordinary person, and she returned the money that could have made life easier and more comfortable for her family. She returned the money because it was not hers. "The feeling of doing something honest is different," she said. "With [the act of returning the money], I don't feel guilty that I took another person's money."

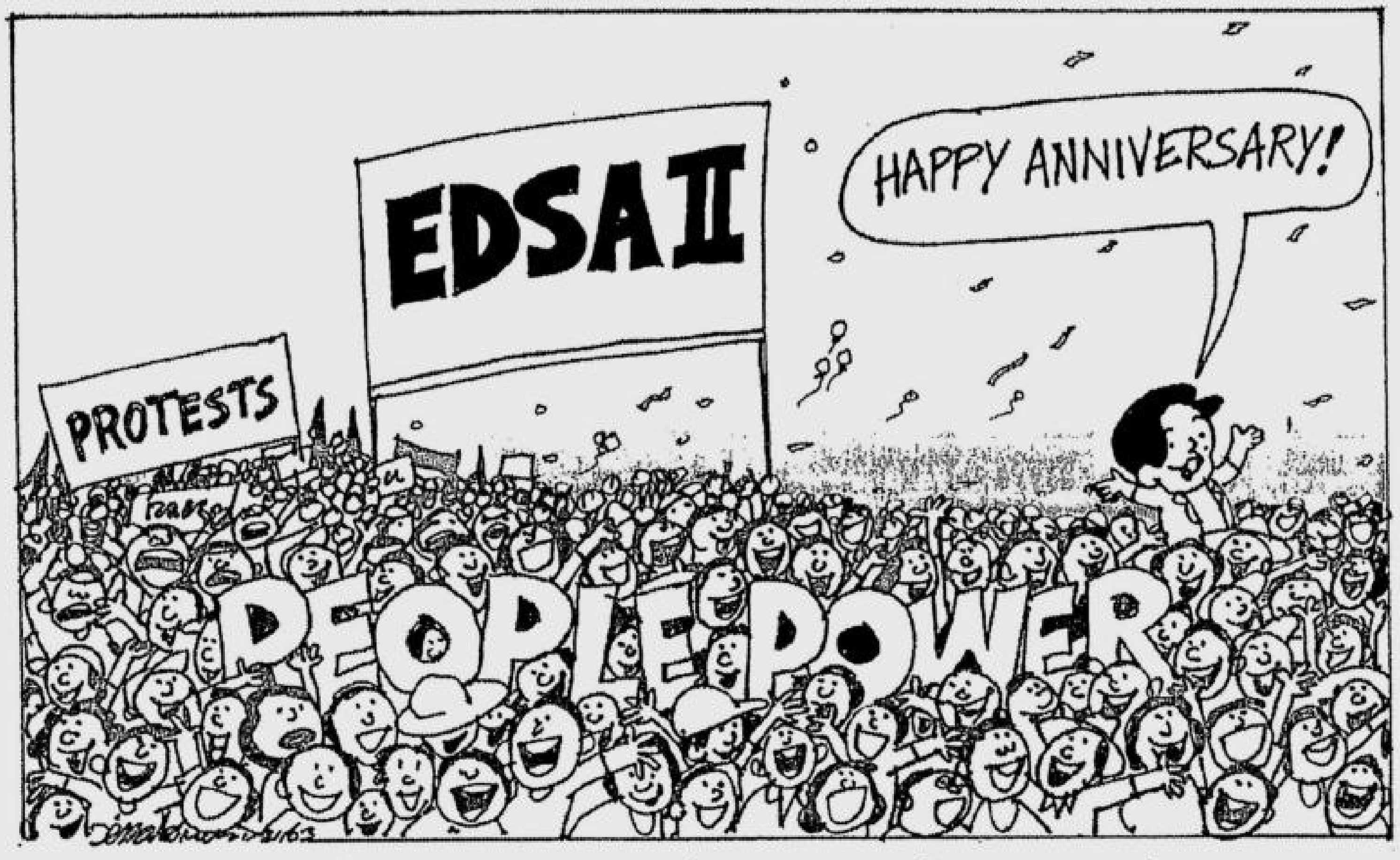
A hero is a person admired for his or her achievements and noble qualities. A hero is also a person who shows great courage, and not only physical but moral courage. It certainly took moral courage for Sotelo to return the money to its rightful owner when she could have kept it to make life easier and more comfortable for her family. But she overcame the temptation to be dishonest—and that made her different from the others.

The Sotelo story was on the front page and in the prime TV and radio newscasts for two days. Why did it rate such media play? Because it was "big" news, or at least, "unusual" news. A popular definition of news is this: When a dog bites a man, that is not news; when a man bites a dog, that is news. This definition stresses the "oddity" aspect of news and considers news to be anything that deviates from normal standards of behavior or action.

In these times of widespread dishonesty, cheating and corruption, the singular act of a low-salaried employee of returning a big amount of money to its owner is certainly news. Dishonesty now is rampant and corruption is considered something "normal," something that does not shock the jaded consumer of news anymore. Half a million pesos is peanuts when compared to the billions of pesos being stolen from the national coffers or to the hundreds of millions exchanging hands in many instances of graft and corruption.

Sotelo has become that personality who is both a hero and a celebrity. American social historian Daniel Boorstin made a distinction between the two: "The hero is known for achievements, the celebrity for well-knownness. The hero reveals the possibilities of human nature, the celebrity reveals the possibilities of the press and the media. Celebrities are people who make the news, but heroes are people who make history. Time makes heroes but dissolves celebrities." In time, the celebrity of Sotelo will wear off, but people like her who show scrupulous honesty will always be in the news.

Some people may not agree that Sotelo should be called a hero. But at the very least, she is an outstanding role model for our times. The times call for honesty and moral uprightness. If we had more people like her, we would have a more honest government, a more upright society, a better nation.



People don't trust solons to change Charter

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

CONGRESSMEN are elected by their constituents in their districts to represent them in Congress and protect their welfare. That is why they are "representatives" and the body to which they are elected is called "House of Representatives." They take their orders from the people, who pay them their salaries and allowances. The people are their employers, their masters. And that's whom they promise to obey when they're campaigning to be elected.

On the matter of Charter change, the people have signified in two separate surveys that they do not want Charter change, whether by constituent assembly or by constitutional convention. In the Pulse Asia survey, four out of every five respondents said they were against Cha-cha. In the Social Weather Station poll, 58 percent said they do not want Cha-cha.

Why then are the congressmen, the representatives of the people, still pushing for Cha-cha? Because they have selfish motives. They are not after the welfare of the people at all but after their own welfare. They want Cha-cha to benefit themselves.

When the Constitution is open for amendments, the first thing that they will do is abolish term limits and the provisions against political dynasties. Then they will change the system of government from presidential to parliamentary.

Why parliamentary? Because ambitious politicians, knowing they can't win a presidential election, want to become head of government through the parliamentary system. Under this system, any pipsqueak congressman who would be the counterpart of members of parliament can become prime minister, the head of government, if he has enough money to buy the votes of his fellow MPs. The position of the top executive of the nation, the prime minister, will be for sale. The choice will not be up to the people. The choice will depend on the MPs. And they will vote for the candidate only if the price is right.

That is why the people are overwhelmingly against Cha-cha, especially if it is done by a constituent assembly. Because they do not trust the present members of Congress, especially the congressmen who are pushing for Cha-cha.

This was evident even among the Kapihan sa Manila audience yesterday which was composed mostly of knowledgeable journalists and newsmakers. They applauded those who spoke against it. Not one spoke in favor of Cha-cha. They applauded the anti-Cha-cha panelists (Sen. Serge Osmeña III and Rep. Satur Ocampo) and were indifferent to the arguments of pro-Cha-cha congressmen (Gerry Espina and Constantino Jaraulla).

Congressmen say the surveys were against Cha-cha because the people do not know the issues. But the Kapihan audience was composed of knowledgeable people and they were still against it. In fact, more so.

And whether by constituent assembly or by con-con, we should not change the Constitution at this time. Admittedly, our Constitution is not perfect. No constitution is. There are certain provisions that can be improved. But most of the provisions are good.

If we open the Constitution to amendment by a convention, there is no limit to what it can do. It can change the good provisions as well as the bad. In fact, it can throw away the whole Constitution. It will be open season.

Besides, a con-con will be very expensive, and we can't even afford the basic necessities of government.

In a constituent assembly, on the other hand, the change can be enumerated and limited before it even starts. Plus it would be cheaper.

But as mentioned earlier, the people do not trust the present members of Congress to monkey with the Constitution. To be safe, they would rather not touch it all at this time. The present Congress is just not credible, and the movers for Cha-cha cannot change that. And it is their own fault. They made themselves untrustworthy.

Osmeña said it all. "The system of government is not important. There will be parliamentary crooks or federal crooks as there are now presidential crooks. The important thing is the people, not the system. If we put the same crooks in government, whether it is parliamentary, federal or presidential, we would still have the same rotten government."

We must first change the people who run the government. That means not voting in the 2004 elections for the re-electionists who are now pushing for Cha-cha. They have ulterior motives. Vote for those who are against it.

In case they succeed in changing the Constitution, vote against it in the plebiscite. Don't believe the pro Cha-cha people. They will be fooling you. They will take advantage of you. If they are doing that now, they can do worse in a parliamentary system where both the legislative and executive branches of government will be under the control of the party in power. Parliament will be an old boys' club where members will cover up for one another.

If you are shocked by what the House of Representatives is doing now, imagine what a unicameral parliament can do without a senate to check its abuses. There will be no checks and balances.

Congressmen say passage of legislation will be faster in a unicameral assembly. But that is exactly the danger. The legislative railroad will run faster. There will be nobody to check the abuses of parliament.

A time to witness

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

(Conclusion).

ANNE Frank's diary has a special resonance for me today—and that is part of its power, too, that it speaks to you personally—because we live in a time that is not unlike hers. A time rocked by the march of folly, if not the march of armies themselves. A time marked by intolerance and hatred and strife. A time given to the stilling of tongues or, worse, our own surrender of thought and judgment from the fear of setting ourselves off as different or born to the "wrong" race.

I am referring to the world spawned by 9/11.

There are differences of course. Unlike the German drive toward expansion more than half a century ago, which was motivated by little more than Aryan hubris, the American-led campaign against terror is not without provocation. The razing of the two towers in New York is truly a crime against humanity, and we would do monstrously ill to forget the faces of those who were buried alive in the rubble or who jumped to their deaths to escape the raging fires. Terrorism is a real bane. All of humanity must commit to push it to the sea.

But for the same reason, as I've said repeatedly, I do not know why an acute remembering on one hand should entail a resolute forgetting on the other. I do not know why our effort to remember the faces of those who perished in 9/11 should demand a blurring of the faces of those who perish elsewhere, often with the help of the country that now proposes to lead the world in a crusade against terror. Or more than a blurring of their faces, their consignment to the worms, or worse, to blips on the radar screen.

I do not know that we are hurtling toward another Holocaust, though we would do well to guard against it with our lives. I do not know that we are reliving the nightmare of the past, though we would do well to guard it with our souls.

But this much I do know: The "war against terror" has not brought out a flowering of thought and dream, it is driving to the backroom of a warehouse, through the secret police that roams outside, the secret police of jingoism and forced quandaries—"you are with me or against me"—those that dare to feel sorrow, those that dare to find laughter in their hearts. That the "war against terror" does not promise the coming of light, it promises the coming of men in the night, men with hooded faces, with small holes in them for the eyes and mouth, to pick out the odd, the different, the defiant and cart them off to numberless rooms.

There are many ways to fight this tyranny or more than tyranny, this swirling oppression of death and madness. One can do so by taking to the streets, and pushing it back with the power of political force. That is what the anti-war demonstrators are doing in various parts of the world, not least in the United States and Great Britain.

One can fight this tyranny by speaking out against it, and pushing it back with the power of moral force. One can always take a stand against the looming war in synagogues and churches, in Plaza Miranda and the media, in home and hearth.

Or one can fight this tyranny by bearing witness to our times.

It is not as easy as it sounds. Refusing to bow down to intolerance is not so easy when your neighbor or your community, gripped by fear about the unseen enemy lurking in the dark, waiting to strike, rives the world into enemy and friend. The sensation, as I have experienced writing columns in a country that has a way of internalizing the American dilemma faster than actors internalize their roles, is not unlike being driven to the backroom of a warehouse while the Gestapo roams outside, waiting to ferret you out and make artwork of your skin.

The threat is no less obdurate for not being physical, though I can imagine that in some places the sanctions may very well include the physical. I have had not just my share of tirade and insult from local detractors and from Filipinos living in the US in particular, I have had my share of threats of mayhem from batty individuals and groups. Still, none of it compares with the threat of being excluded, differentiated, turned away as someone who belongs to the "wrong" tribe, like a pariah, or leper, or what is now the equivalent of once being a Jew, which is being an Arab.

To be able to say in the face of this, in the pit of one's hiding place or the stillness of one's heart, "I may be forced to hide my body, but I will not be forced to hide my mind, my mouth may be gagged but my voice will seep through like a gentle evanescence and burst to heaven in song, the world may riot and threaten me with murder, physical and psychological, but I will wield my power and ability to create things, moral and spiritual, and fling my creations at the blight like a sorcerer's incantation:" To be able to say all this—that is the greatest act of grace there is.

Indeed, to be able to discover in the face of all this, in the quiet of one's individuality and the solace of one's convictions, the ancient wisdom of Anne Frank's childlike words "In spite of everything I still believe people are really good at heart;" to be able to say in the face of all this, in the upheaval of one's body and the riot of one's soul, "Despite the cruelty and ignorance and meanness, the human spirit will rise to reclaim itself, discovering anew all that is true and good, as it has done countless times yesterday and as it will do again and again tomorrow;" to be able to glimpse in the face of all this, in the prism of our longings and the refraction of our dreams, the common thread that binds all of us, the common laughter that gurgles in the heart of all our children, the common awkward hopes and innocent yearnings in all of our hearts, though we be 13 to 130. To be able to do all this:

That is the greatest act of defiance there is.

Realities about a con-con election

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THOSE who are pushing for amendments to the Constitution belong to two schools. One wants to effect Charter change through a constitutional convention to which delegates will be elected simultaneously with the national elections of 2004. Some senators, led by Senate President Franklin Drilon, want this method of change and President Macapagal-Arroyo has indicated a preference for it, too. The other school wants Charter change through a constituent assembly convened by the present members of Congress at the earliest possible time, so that by 2004 we will be voting for members of parliament. To this school belong some 125 members of the House of Representatives, led by Speaker Jose de Venecia.

* * *

What makes a con-con attractive is that it will remove the amendment process from the politicians and put it in the hands of academics, business leaders, NGO leaders, etc. and not the politicians. That sounds really ideal, especially for the civil society which abhors politicians.

But the con-con school, which includes ranking church people, has to consider certain political realities. The weeks leading to the May 2004 elections will be so politicized that the non-politicians running for con-con delegate will be lost. As former Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, who was himself a youthful delegate to the 1971 Constitutional Convention, pointed out to this columnist recently, in many areas civil society as we know it in Metro Manila and other urbanized regions is virtually non-existent. Out there, all they have are the *jueteng* crowds.

* * *

The other possibility is that candidates for the con-con would be highly politicized too, meaning, they will either be those who lost in the party nominations or in previous elections, or the wives, children and other relatives of the politicians, whose learning curve in tackling complex charter provisions and issues will be so long that the con-con will take forever to finish. Sen. Joker Arroyo calls them the "second-stringers," and we saw this phenomenon in the Eleventh Congress after all the veterans bowed out of office due to the term limits. But the difference is that these second stringers will be backed up by powerful vested interests in order to win in the 2004 elections.

* * *

If elections for the con-con will be held simultaneously with the 2004 elections, those pushing for it should keep in mind that chances are, the top officials of the land to be elected will be movie personalities and celebrities (a campaign for six million signatures to convince FPJ to run has just been launched). This reality is one of the disasters citizens are trying to avert by a shift from the presidential to the parliamentary system, where the prime minister is elected by his peers in parliament and not by an electorate over half of whom are unschooled and uninformed. The new set of officials elected in 2004 will doubtless resist any attempt to install a new form of government during their term, since they will have already spent fortunes to win. So the earliest time a shift to a parliamentary can be made is 2010, by which time all opportunities for the Philippines to catch up with our progressive neighbors, all of which have parliamentary governments, shall have vanished.

* * *

I argue that a constituent assembly should be tasked with amending the Constitution since this is the easiest, most practical and inexpensive way to do it. The members of Congress could divide their time between constitution making and legislation. The members of Congress democratically represent the people and, with some exceptions, many of them represent the cream of their regions.

Resistance to a constituent assembly among civil-society groups stems from the suspicion that the members of Congress would be serving their own interests. They seem to be more suspicious about the House than the Senate. But it might be timely to repeat for their benefit what Bulletin publisher Napoleon Rama pointed out to this columnist recently: The House in the 12th Congress was the chamber that voted to impeach Erap in a resolution courageously filed by Isabela Rep. Heherson Alvarez and a few other solons, whereas it was the Senate majority that voted against the opening of the second envelop on Jan. 16, 2001.

* * *

Earlier I wrote about the complaint of Victor and Bessy Buencamino, who own a row of titled apartment houses in Manila. They lamented that Manila RTC Branch 17 Judge Eduardo B. Peralta, Jr., who used to be with the Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 13, hastily ruled in favor of another claimant to their titled property, without even verifying proof of ownership by that claimant. Had the judge sought such verification, the Buencaminos' aid, he would have found out that the claimant had no legal claim to the property. This column published that item in relation to many disputes now arising over conflicting land claims, many of them caused by professional squatter syndicates.

Peralta clarified that a "speedy resolution" of the case was imperative because of the absence of a formal response from the defendant. He stressed that his action was in accordance with the Revised Rule on Summary Procedure and the Rules of Civil Procedure.

Peralta also took strong exception to the "subtle aspersion" here arising from the suggestion about "collusion of squatters, delinquent tenants, unscrupulous lawyers and judges." As a judge, he stressed, "I owe it to myself to obliterate an unwarranted assault on my integrity and honor. As a passive instrument of impartial justice, I do not engage in any sinister confabulation, nay, conspiracy in the resolution of cases."

Citizenship and taxes

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ONE of two major announcements made by President GMA at yesterday's EDSA Dos anniversary Mass was the launch of a major anti-corruption campaign.

Ho-hum, you might say, for hasn't every president (and candidate for public office), starting with Manuel L. Quezon, inveighed against corruption and rallied the citizenry against it?

But something tells me this new campaign has better chances of succeeding, if only because the President has allotted big sums of money for efforts to weed out corrupt elements in the bureaucracy (I didn't take notes, but the amounts mentioned were impressive). She also issued orders to the heads of major centers of corruption, such as the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs, to cut out occasions (and locations) for graft and corruption in their agencies.

We have all of 17 months to see if these bold and brave pronouncements really do have, as they say, "teeth," that is a seriousness of purpose beyond mere rhetoric. But at least we can't say anymore that corruption flourishes in this country because it's tolerated by our leaders.

I also thought this takes one more plank out of the arguments of leaders of the entertainment industry (among other professionals) who, in arguing against the implementation of the 10 percent VAT on their earnings, cite the rampant corruption in government. Well, the President sounds serious now, and has committed serious resources to fight corruption. Shouldn't citizens take this as a signal to do their share?

* * *

FRIENDS in the broadcast and entertainment industry have talked to me about what they believe is an unfair imposition, and basically, they have my sympathies.

It is true that local entertainment is beleaguered, with the audience' share dwindling not just because the audience has less money to spare on non-essentials, but also because of such things as piracy and changing audience tastes. But then, talk to any businessperson these days, entrepreneur or capitalist, and it's obvious everyone is going through hard times.

I don't think hardship is enough of an excuse to win a special concession from the government, especially since, if I understand the arguments right, the new measures apply only to the upper tier of professionals, who earn at least P700,000 a year.

And thank you, Richard Gomez et al., for fighting on my behalf, a movie fan at heart. Once the 10 percent VAT was explained, I've noticed that the arguments of the industry spokespersons have shifted from their self-interest to the public welfare. The reason they're marching and protesting, they now say, is that they don't want us to be paying more for movie or concert tickets.

But as the first-class theaters charging double the usual rates have proven, apparently, the market can bear higher ticket prices, as long as the industry gives them what they want.

* * *

ANYWAY, I'd like to quote from the e-mail of a friend, circulated through an e-group I belong to, on this issue. He is anonymous, by the way, only because I didn't have time to secure his permission to quote from his piece.

"Arguments being made to justify (the) continued exemption of professionals and entertainers from VAT are unconvincing," writes my friend. "Times are hard; so it is for all of us, including our government which needs these tax revenues. Professionals and entertainers cannot claim to be harder hit than wage and salary workers—all of whom are bearing the burden of the VAT. Aga Mulach wants his professional fee from Jollibee exempted from VAT even as customers of Jollibee already pay VAT for the Chickenjoy—they buy.

"Yes, indeed there are big-time tax evaders and plenty of corruption in the use of tax money. But to use the behavior of criminals as the justification for non-payment of taxes by good citizens seems like a prescription for driving our country from the mouth of hell to its deepest bottom. Yes, the VAT will make the services of professionals and entertainers more expensive to their final customers. But since it will merely make their services equally expensive as all other goods and services already being covered by VAT, the economic attractiveness of professional and entertainment services relative to other goods and services should not change.

* * *

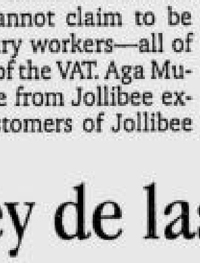
"WHAT galls me most is that many of our friends who advocate many valuable objectives from peace and order to literacy to cultural identity to self-determination to preserving the environment to smoother traffic—all of which depend on a competent and effective government—find it so easy to stand up and resist bearing their fair share of the taxes necessary for this government.

"I am even more disturbed by the fact that in arguing for their own special interest on this matter several of these professionals and entertainers publicly discount the many valuable conditions created by government essential for the practice of their profession or trade or craft. It seems wrong to premise one's payment of taxes (by demanding to know) what has government done for us lately, while discounting and taking for granted many conditions already created by our government, conditions which do not exist in many other countries from Afghanistan to Somalia where governments have totally failed.

"I believe that we should pay our taxes and we should demand others to pay theirs, too. Such a position will allow us some measure of moral standing to demand clean and honest government. This is about us as a people and nation. It should clearly start with us accepting the burden of tax payment as an essential qualification for demanding better government from whoever may be at its head."

The towns of La Ley de las Indias

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY



Bambi L. Harper

PHILIPPINE towns are basically alike, differing only in size. Generally they are composed of wide and straight streets formed over the natural floor bordered by fences of cane that surround the houses of the inhabitants which are normally of light construction. These are commonly called *de caña* and *nipa* ,being made of these materials.

Cane, especially the one called *caña espino*, acquires a fabulous size and consistency, some of them reaching up to a foot in diameter serving perfectly as columns for constructions. Cane of smaller and softer proportions but still four times bigger than European ones is called *caña bojo* and are used as ties and crosspieces of the roof and are interlaced to form the floors of dwellings. The tying and fastening of the different parts that enter into the construction are done by intertwining a root called *bejuco* that is very hard, flexible and resistant, and fortuitously abundant in the whole country. It is used as rope to tie up large bundles. Taken apart, it is also utilized for the caning of chairs and beds.

It is said that in the Philippines the construction of houses starts with the roof. The natives begin with the roof, composed of four girders, a ridge and crosspieces, all made of cane. It is later covered with *nipa*, a species of palm to form the roof that is elevated and supported by posts previously nailed and ready to receive it.

All these small huts have one floor, raised approximately a meter from the ground and a small staircase of cane that is raised during the night from the entrance. The *principales* or well-to-do natives generally inhabit houses of wood, with columns of *narra* or *alintatao*, sometimes utilizing the same type of roof as the nipa hut but with more complicated and durable construction. Many of the roofs, though, are now being replaced by zinc to avoid the danger of fires that are referred to as *quemas*. The interior part of the house is made of stone or bricks. The fires tend to be truly devastating in the towns, some of which disappear totally after being devoured by this ill-fated element.

Caña explodes when it burns and its burning trunks travel great distances, falling on the roofs of *nipa* and spreading the catastrophe with awesome speed. Since fires as a rule take place during the dry season, the *nipa* is completely dry and in an easy condition to burn given the effects of a tropical sun.

The native is not particularly bothered by the destruction of his dwelling since he possesses little of value. He picks up his belongings composed of his bedding that is a mat, a pair of shirts, his slippers and, with his rooster under his arm, doesn't contribute or bother to help extinguish the flames. Completely in conformity with his fate, he begins the following day to construct another house that is just like the previous one.

The plazas of towns are ordinarily very spacious. In them are found the church and convent, the tribunal, the jailhouse and the school. The law provides that between houses there should be a distance of nine *varas* and that banana trees should be planted in the surroundings, since these are very useful in preventing fire or keeping it from spreading.

The capital of each province is called a*cabecera*. The *alcalde mayor*, the chief authority, resides in a house known as the *casa real*.

During the rainy season, most of the roads are totally impassable. Road construction consists of clearing those of importance of weeds and leveling the ground, while roads or paths of lesser importance are untouched and formed simply with the transit or passage of people or animals.

When an important personage announces a visit to any town, the defects are covered rapidly by means of a simple device. The priest, the *gobernadorcillo* and the *cabezas de barangay* prepare a big feast. The main street is cleared of weeds and grass that grow rapidly in two weeks' time. The ruts in the road are filled with soil, but with the first rains, it will return to their natural state. Arches of bamboo are put up and covered with decorations that are used only once. Will the playing of bands, fireworks, buntings, shouts, greetings, balls and good food in the convent and the tribunal, the visitor neither sees nor understands the real situation, and has to rely on superficial information that is not always true.

* * *

The man who wrote down these observations was Lt. Col. Manuel Scheidnagel (who must have been of German descent) who was assigned to the Philippines as secretary to the captain general at first and later as secretary to a commission that was supposed to reorganize the *cuadrilleros* (government soldiers) in the provinces. He apparently had the opportunity to travel around the islands.

He noted the distances between towns and the almost total lack of communications so that there were many areas where no official ever stepped foot. Consequently there was little or no information about certain places and sometimes the information given were outright lies.

(From Manuel Scheidnagel's "Las Colonias Españolas de Asia: Islas Filipinas," 1880.)

Moms and secrets

YOUNG BLOOD

Krizna Gomez

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

SOME people say keeping some things secret is essential to maintaining a relationship. It either adds "spice" because of the mystery that shrouds the person keeping secrets or it serves the more "noble" purpose of sparing the other pain.

But where exactly do we draw the line between doing so to spare a loved one from our pain and doing it to exclude the other from our lives? I'd say, ask your mom.

Recently I sent an e-mail to my favorite professor who is in Texas doing his doctoral studies. I congratulated him because I found out they were expecting a baby. I was really happy for him, but somehow I felt stupid for feeling that way.

An hour earlier, my younger sister sent me a text message saying that my mom had taken a two-month leave from her work. Two months? Was she seriously ill? When I asked my sister why, I got a jolting reply. "Mom lost her baby, *Ate*," she said.

Blackout. Lost her what? Since when did she have a baby? Apparently, my mom was a few weeks pregnant and no one knew it except her. She had lost the baby four days before my sister told me about, and my sister did it because she didn't have anyone to share the story with. So thanks to my sister's breaking the "secrecy rule," I had the "privilege" of knowing finally.

I didn't know how to feel. I received the message in the middle of my class, and I didn't know if I should stand up to announce to everyone, "Hey people, I was supposed to have another sibling!"

So there I was an hour after I got the news about my mother, congratulating someone for having something I had just lost.

I wanted to feel so many things at that time, but I felt like I was deprived of the chance to do so. I wanted to feel concerned over my mom's getting pregnant at 43, but when I talked to her about it, she made me feel like I didn't know what I was talking about. Perhaps she was right in thinking I was overreacting because there was nothing to be concerned about anymore because she was no longer pregnant. I wanted to get really excited and grateful, since I was actually the only one in the family who had been asking for another baby. And finally, I wanted to feel sad over losing a sibling, the one I was planning to send to exclusive schools when I became a lawyer. But how could I feel sad over losing something I didn't even know I had? How could I grieve over the death of someone I didn't even know existed?

I remembered how close I was to learning about it. One time during the Christmas break, I read my aunt's message on my mom's cell phone, asking if she already had her monthly period. It wasn't really significant to me at that time, but thoughts played in my head.

When my mom came out of the bathroom, I began teasing her that she might be pregnant. Of course, I didn't know how close I was to the truth because firstly, my mom was already 43, and secondly, they didn't want any baby anymore. She was getting really pissed but I went on saying, "That'll be great, Ma! Imagine having a menopause baby in the family. I know a lot of babies like that turn out to be geniuses!"

On the Sunday they were supposed to bring me back to my dorm, she didn't go with us, saying she was having dysmenorrhea. It must be severe, I thought, because she had not been feeling well since the night before.

Later she told me she was bleeding at that time. She called me the day after she bled not to tell me, "Dear, I have something to tell you..." but to ask how my first day in school went!

It was not the first time she kept things like that from me. Last year, my cousin and uncle fetched me at my dorm on a Friday. When we were in the car, they told me we had to drop by St. Luke's because my uncle had to meet with a nurse there. He said he was buying a cell phone for me from this nurse, all the time they were impishly grinning, but I was too excited to mind it.

When we got to the hospital, I saw my father at the lobby together with my lola. I was worried. I asked them if there was something they weren't telling me, and I insisted that they tell me which room number they were going to. I was almost running towards the room, and then I got really worried when I read my mom's name on the door. I rushed inside and found her sitting on the hospital bed ready to go.

It was only then that they told me she had an operation three days earlier, and I didn't know about it. While I was crying, everyone was laughing. I had never felt so left out and stupid in my life.

I wanted to be scared and concerned for her like I surely would have been had I known about the operation, but she deprived me of the opportunity. Our relatives from the province were all there to look after her while I, her daughter, wasn't able to do anything for her although I was in the city. That time she made me feel like I was incapable of doing anything, not even feeling.

I don't know if I'm just blowing things up, but I am curious. Am I not part of the family? Wasn't she supposed to have told me when she was in pain at the very least? Couldn't she have set aside her concern for me and for once just acted like an ordinary woman who hurts and mourns when she loses a life in her womb?

I hate her for that. I hate it when she gives me reasons like: I didn't want you to worry. I've always wanted to tell her, "Ma, I want you to know that you're not making me feel important to you because you're sparing me from feeling bad about the bad things that happen to you and to our family. Since I went to college, I started feeling more grown-up because I thought you were letting me into some 'uncharted territories' you never allowed me to go into when I was younger. Now I feel betrayed. There's nothing else in this world I want more than for you to make me feel like I'm part of the things that you undergo, that I'm your daughter with whom you won't be scared of sharing your feelings, the same way I've worked hard all these years to be as candid with you. I know I can handle those things. I can, and you just have to believe. If you don't have faith in me, just have faith in how you've brought me up to be a strong person all these years."

I wonder how many mothers feel good about doing what my mother does. My roommate told me her mom does it, too. It scares me that someday I might end up doing the same to my kids.

I thought mothers know best. True or not? Ask yourself.

Krizna Gomez, 17, is a second year political science student at the Ateneo de Manila University.

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Congress becoming too expensive and useless

THERE are moves to change to a parliamentary system on the grounds that this will make us progress faster.

Nothing can be further from the truth. It will be the same dog with a new collar. Our present congressmen will be the same people who will be the members of parliament. They represent districts which are their personal fiefdoms.

Worse, under a parliamentary system the executive department is fused with the legislature. Given the greed and lack of patriotism of our congressmen, they will probably allocate most of the budget to themselves and the rest of us will be a lot poorer because of it. It would be like jumping from the frying pan to the fire.

The question we should ask is, can we really affqrd a legislature as it is configured today? During the second to the last episode of the now defunct TV show hosted by Randy David and Katrina Legarda, Sen. Gringo Honasan said that he had a study on how much it cost our taxpayers to maintain the House and the Senate. He said that it cost taxpayers P30,000 an hour to maintain a congressman or a senator, or P240,000 a day, based on an eight-hour working day. If we multiply P240,000 by 240 congressmen (including party list congressmen) and 24 senators, the total cost of maintaining Congress comes up to around P64 million a day or about P22 billion a year.

Most bills passed by our legislators are local bills renaming towns, health centers, etc. They only pass four or five bills of national importance a year. This means that each of these important bills costs the taxpayers P5 billion, the most expensive bills in the world today.

It would be better if we had a federal government composed of around 10 states with their own small legislatures. Instead of a parliament, why don't we have direct democracy?

At present, Congress commissions the UP Law Center to draft laws of national importance. We already have too many laws. When we do need new laws of national importance, then the executive can commission the UP College of Law to draft these bills and then have them approved by the people through a yearly plebiscite. Since the Comelec will be fully computerized, the costs of a plebiscite will be minimal compared to maintaining the present legislature.

—RICO XERES, Eisenhower Street, Greenhills, San Juan

How about a prayer mountain in Tuba?

WHY don't we replace the blasted Marcos bust in Tuba, Benguet, with that of Jesus Christ?

This could be the biggest bust of Jesus not only in the entire country but maybe in the whole world. For sure, this will be a favorite pilgrimage area. We could even add a life-size concrete way of the cross, a rosary garden, a grotto, a meditation place, a chapel and a hotel or inn (for those who want to stay longer) and presto, we will have a place that is ideal for a spiritual retreat.

At least, the lowlanders who flock to Baguio during the Lenten season (to splurge instead of sacrificing and praying) will have no excuse for not spending time on this transformed prayer mountain.

—ANTONIO Z. LUNA, 63 Ysabelo Zuno St.' Rosario, Batangas

Sipalay farmer did not die from torture

AS THE public information officer of the 3rd Civil Affairs Unit, 3rd Infantry Division, Philippine Army, I would like to express, on behalf of the 61st Infantry Battalion, our side of the story on the reported death of Moreto Arcadenia, a farmer of Sipalay, Negros Occidental, who allegedly was tortured by Army troopers.

Based on the investigation conducted by the 303rd Infantry Brigade, here's a backgrounder on why farmers and some barangay folks of Manlocahoc were brought to the 61st Infantry Battalion headquarters in Sipalay.

An encounter between elements of the battalion and communist rebels took place last Nov. 11, 2002 in which one soldier was killed and another wounded. Aware of the enemy's tactic of hiding their firearms in the bushes and mixing with the civilians to avoid detection, the soldiers who conducted pursuit operations questioned suspicious looking males in the area where the enemy fled. One of them was Moreto Arcadenia.

The men were brought to an Army detachment in Barasbarasan in Barangay Manlocahoc for further appraisal of their true identity. In the course of their transfer, some suffered lacerations and hematoma because of the rocky terrain.

Maj. Jon Aying. the battalion chief, talked to the apprehended civilians. Arcadenia complained of stomach ache and pain on account of his wounds so Aying directed that Arcadenia be brought to Negros Oriental Provincial Hospital. Later, we learned that upon the insistent prodding of Karapatan and Bayan, Arcadenia was transferred to Siliman University Medical Center with his wife's consent.

We were surprised to read in the newspaper about his death and the clamor of Bayan and Karapatan for the pull-out of troops from Negros.

The 303rd Infantry Brigade and the entire Philippine Army are committed to uphold and respect the human rights of everyone and will not tolerate any violation of these rights. We had no part in the death of Arcadenia. We are sorry for the deceptive tactics employed by Karapatan and Bayan to portray us as human rights violators.

The information fed to us by the residents themselves on the sightings of armed groups in the area indicate that we enjoy their trust and confidence.

—CAPT. LYNDON J. SOLLESTA public information officer, Camp Gen. Macario Peralta, Jamindan, Capiz

Windmills on his mind

SOME years ago, I wrote to our major newspapers to urge the government to look into the possibility of using windmills as an alternative source of energy. I suggested then that such windmills could be installed in provinces facing the Pacific Ocean (for an abundant supply of wind) like Catanduanes, Samar, Leyte, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Davao Oriental, Cagayan, Isabela, Aurora, Quezon, Sorsogon, etc.

At the time I got positive reactions from Senators Francisco S. Tatad and Juan M. Flavier. But they were only two among our 218 congressmen and 24 senators who should act on this proposal for it to become a reality.

It is now 2003 and I would like to reiterate that suggestion in order to free our country from too much dependence on foreign oil.

—PAUL R. MORTEL MBLA Court, Malanday, Marikina City

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Models of loyalty and love

AS THE world ushered in 2003 with feasts and merrymaking, I paused to look back to see if there was something good some political figures had shown that was worthy of emulation. I came up with four personalities with unique qualities.

When President Bill Clinton was roasted, fried, microwaved, the person who could have fueled the sizzling temperature more was Vice President Al Gore. Time and Newsweek magazines carried no reaction from him for or against the beleaguered president. He kept his silence, stood by him and did his duties as the second in rank to the president.

When President Estrada was maligned and stripped of his office, I witnessed on television Sen. Edgardo Angara standing by him shoulder to shoulder, silent, cool, determined to be just near.

These two men showed to the world the best in them. Their friendship and loyalty were tested, tried and found to be of sterling quality. Theirs were friendship and loyalty in action.

Hillary Clinton and Dr. Loi Estrada knew beyond reasonable doubt the sins of their mates yet true to their commitment "for better or for worse" they faced the public's condemnation, silent but unbowed. I believe, they will remain faithful to their respective spouses "till death do us part."

Friendship, loyalty and love in action from these leaders are worthy of emulation.

May God infuse into our Filipino leaders, in whatever section of public service they serve, some virtues worthy of emulation by our future young leaders.

—ROSARIO R. LIBERATO 21 Molave St., M. Romeo Vill., Sta. Lucia, Pasig City

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Nun appeals for help

THIS is an appeal for help for my brother, Matias Z. Sumampong, who was confined at the VSMMC in Cebu and diagnosed with a kidney problem (staghorn calculi on the right kidney). He needs an operation to remove a kidney stone.

At present, he is an outpatient and temporarily staying at Asilo de la Milagrosa, which is administered by the Daughters of Charity under the supervision of Sr. Ma. Lourdes Mercado, D.C., in Cebu City.

I would like to request generous readers to financially assist my brother since he cannot afford to shoulder all the medical expenses. He is the sole provider in the family and he has nine children who are still young and dependent on his support. His other siblings are financially unstable, but they have contributed some money although it was not enough to cover all the expenses. Our congregation already extended support for his other basic needs.

May the Good Lord, whose love and mercy cannot be measured, reward you and your loved ones a hundredfold.

—SR. EUFROCINA Z. SUMAMPONG, MSCS, Missionary Sisters of St. Charles, Quezon City

Politics and the death penalty

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE DEBATES around the death penalty, here and in the United States, show how much we share in terms of politics.

With a political system patterned after America's, our government officials, like their American counterparts, find themselves having to read the public pulse on such issues as capital punishment, and trying to gain brownie points with the public by currying to prevailing sentiments.

Let's look at the parallels in the way the death penalty is being handled in the two countries:

In 1972 the US Supreme Court ruled that death sentences were unconstitutional because they were "arbitrary and capricious." The ruling put a de facto moratorium on capital punishment that lasted until 1976, when the US Supreme Court allowed individual states to bring back the death penalty. Support for the death penalty has come mainly from conservatives who argue that executions deter crime.

After a quarter of a century of experimenting with the death penalty, the tide seems to be turning in America, with opposition to capital punishment now coming even from the conservatives. This change in public opinion has been spurred mainly by more than a hundred cases where death row convicts were able to appeal their cases, using new DNA technologies to prove their innocence. Some of the cases involved people who had been in death row for as long as 20 years.

The Philippines also abolished the death penalty in 1987, after the ouster of Marcos and the drafting of a new constitution. But Congress brought back the death penalty in 1993, legislators bowing to the demands of law-and-order groups who argued that we needed capital punishment to control "heinous crimes." The restored death penalty was first implemented under Joseph Estrada, with six executions taking place in 1999 alone.

Having tasted blood, the public not only asked for more executions but also looked at the death penalty as the solution to every problem in the country. There was a proposal to make fraudulent land titling a crime punishable by death. In Congress, bills were filed to expand the list of "heinous crimes." One bill proposed death for professional squatting; another one, filed by a congressman named Mark Jimenez, called for the execution of racketeers.

Eventually, Estrada suspended death sentences, supposedly out of respect for the Catholic Jubilee Year. The move was obviously political, an attempt to placate the Catholic bishops who were becoming increasingly vocal in their criticism of Estrada.

Alas, Estrada himself was deposed and now faces charges of plunder, a crime for which he could be meted the death penalty.

President Macapagal has been ambivalent about capital punishment. A devout Catholic, she has tried to accommodate the bishops' opposition to the death penalty, commuting several death sentences. At the same time, there was a time when she called for the execution of kidnappers, an obvious attempt again to please the Chinese-Filipino community.

But the possibilities of wrongful convictions are even more real in the Philippines. Even without using DNA testing, which is still too expensive for Filipinos, our Supreme Court has already uncovered so many cases of wrongful convictions. According to the Free Legal Assistance Group, our Supreme Court had reviewed 672 death sentences as of June 2002, and affirmed only 171. The rest of the sentences—covering 75 percent of cases reviewed—were found flawed, with the Supreme Court sending 32 cases back to the trial courts for further proceedings, reducing the penalties in 421 cases and, most dramatically, acquitting death convicts in 48 of the cases.

It's a chilling thought, the fact that we may have executed and will continue to execute innocent people. It was this terrible realization that led Illinois Gov. George Ryan to commute, just last week, the sentences of all 157 death row inmates in his state. In effect, without abolishing capital punishment, Ryan closed down Illinois' death row.

What's so striking here is that Ryan is a political conservative, who ran for office with a pro-death penalty stand. Ryan's change of heart began when one death row inmate was ordered released two days before his scheduled execution, after a last-minute investigation found he was innocent. Ryan eventually commissioned a study of capital punishment, and the findings showed that the justice system was riddled with problems, resulting in so many wrongful convictions.

In a speech to explain his commutation of the death sentences, Ryan once again invoked the US Supreme Court's description in 1972 of the death penalty as being "arbitrary and capricious." Ryan asked where the fairness was when the death penalty is meted out to two percent of people convicted of murder, with most of those sent to death row being from minority groups, or those who are mentally retarded or with mental problems.

I could go on and on with Ryan's other arguments against the death penalty, including evidence showing that the death penalty does not deter crime. But if I may return to the theme of today's column, it's important to look at the context of Ryan's decision: midway through his term, the governor announced he would not run for reelection, in effect freeing himself from having to cater to the whims of public opinion.

In the end, Ryan's commutation of death sentences was itself a political move. Ryan was finishing his term amid accusations of corruption but all that is fading into the background because of what he did with death row inmates. Ryan's move has brought profuse praise from world leaders, and even a nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize.

It will be interesting to see if our President, who, like Ryan has declared a "no more politics" position, will endorse a bill to Congress seeking to abolish the death penalty. That would be a lasting legacy, a stand for life and justice that's certainly preferable to marching along to Bush's drums of death and war.

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Sin raps Cha-cha solons but supports referendum

From page A1

On Sunday, former President Corazon Aquino said she preferred the holding of a referendum on Charter change simultaneous with the 2004 elections.

While Ms Aquino favors amending the Constitution through a constitutional convention, Sin is against Charter change at this time.

"It is immoral to propose Charter change right now and ignore the needs of the people for decent housing, sufficient food and quality education," Sin said in his homily.

"We do not need to change the Constitution to give food to the poor, to house the homeless, and to educate the street children," he said, drawing applause from the Edsa II crowd at the shrine.

Political will

Sin asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to exert "strong political will" to draw the government's attention away from Cha-cha.

What the people need, according to him, is political will on the part of the government because "we have a grave lack of it."

"Madam President, we need you to show us strong political will to focus more on the programs for the poor rather than Charter change," he said.

The President told Japanese reporters on Friday that she preferred Charter change through a con-con because it was the "least divisive" way of amending the Constitution.

In Malacañang, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said the President was leaving the next move to Congress.

"I don't think it's logical to assume that the President will be involved in any further discussions on this matter," Bunye said.

He said that as far as Malacañang was concerned, "we're treating this as an internal matter" of the legislature.

Bunye said the President did not want discussions on Charter change to derail the holding of the 2004 elections. Ms Macapagal had announced that she would not run in the polls.

The President was scheduled to convene the national directorate of the ruling Lakas-CMD in Malacañang last night. The meeting was aimed at firming up the position of the party on Charter change.

The party's co-chairpersons, Ms Macapagal and Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., have expressed divergent views on how to effect amendments to the Constitution.

Noting that "it takes two to cha cha," Bunye called on the House and the Senate to agree on how and when to amend the Constitution.

"Unless they come to an agreement, then we might not even have a Charter change at all," he said.

Post-poll assembly

The efforts in the Senate to muster enough numbers to foil a bid by the House of Representatives to constitute both chambers into a constituent assembly gathered steam yesterday afternoon with at least 16 senators agreeing that any Charter change take place after the 2004 elections.

Of the 16 senators, 14 are amenable that amendments to the Constitution be made through a con-con whose delegates would be elected in 2004 along with national and local officials. A two-thirds vote of all members of the Senate or the vote of 16 senators is required to pass any resolution calling for a con-con.

"The main concern (for the Senate) is to stop the House from introducing Charter changes through a constituent assembly before the 2004 elections," said administration Sen. Ralph Recto.

In his homily, Sin advised politicians "not to put words in people's mouths."

"Do not put your selfish plans into the minds of our already suffering countrymen," he said. "There must be reform not of the Charter but of our myopic minds and selfish ambitions. We need to reform. We need reform of ourselves, not the Constitution."

Asked to explain whether Sin's homily meant that he was against Cha-cha either through a constituent assembly or constitutional convention, Auxiliary Bishop Socrates Villegas replied: "We pity the people."

"That is not the answer to our problems in the country," Villegas, Sin's spokesperson, said.

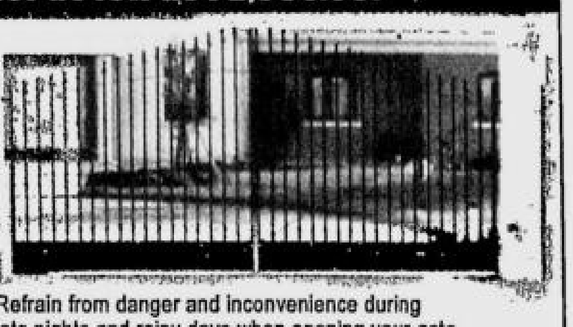
In the House, Negros Oriental Rep. Herminio Teves filed a resolution calling for the holding of a referendum simultaneously with the 2004 elections to "secure a clear people's mandate" on whether to amend the Charter.

Teves filed the resolution a day after Ms Aquino said she preferred consulting the voters first before amending the Charter.

Freedom Constitution

Her proposal did not sit well with Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez. "Cory Aquino forgot that she, without consulting the people, abrogated the 1973 Constitution by a stroke of her pen and gave us her so-called Freedom Constitution without so much the benefit of a referendum."

Gonzalez said Ms Aquino constituted a constitutional commission with 49 members all appointed by her and "ordered this commission to work in haste which is now our 1987 Constitution." *With reports from Carlito Pablo, Juliet L. Javellana and Rocky Nazareno in Manila; Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; and Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*



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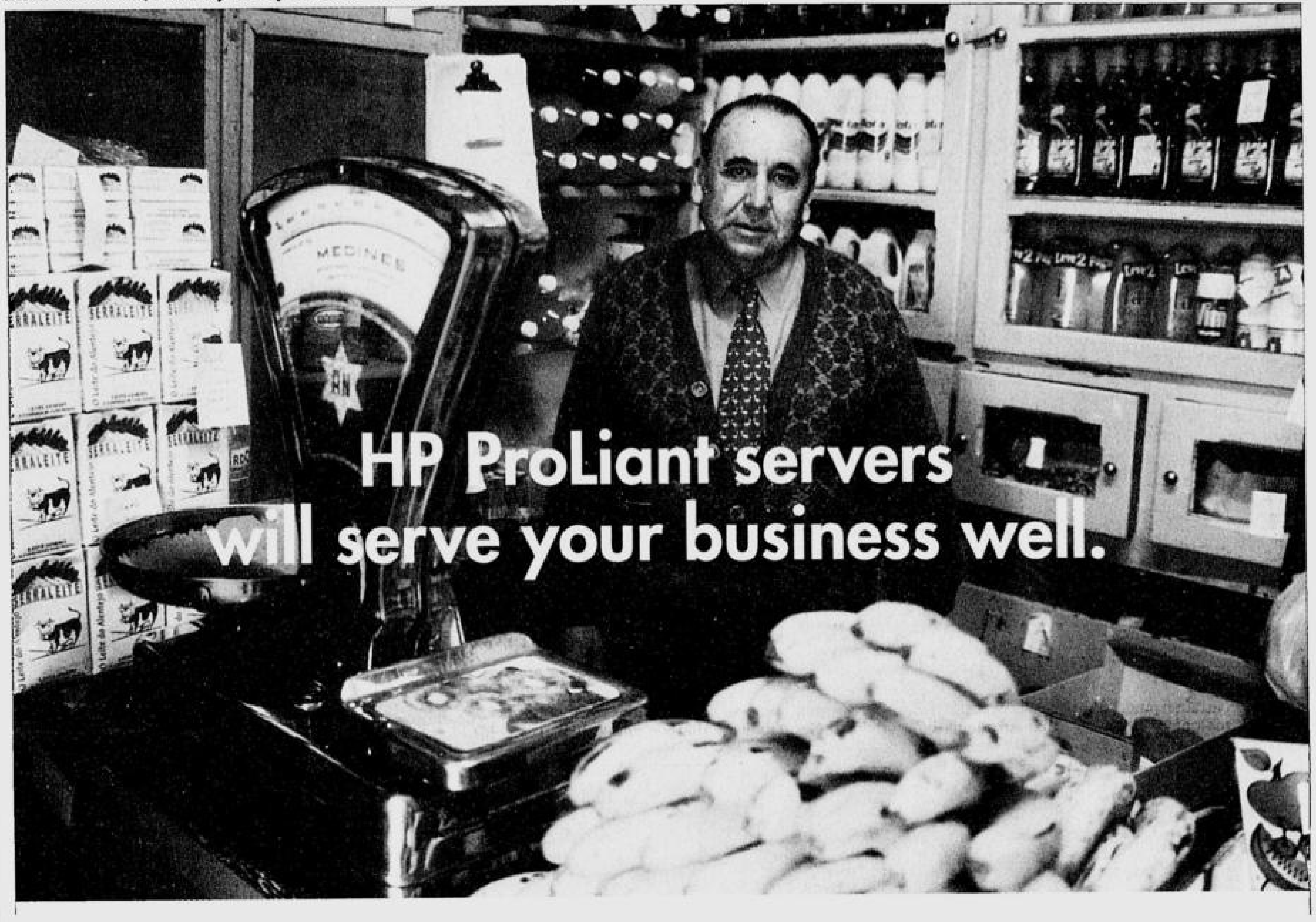
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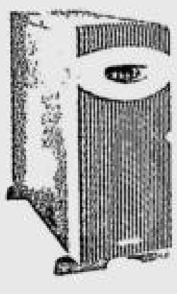

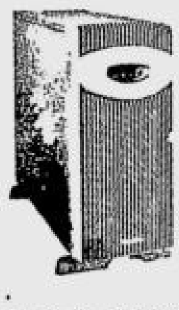

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

US, Britain to welcome Saddam exile

LONDON—British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw on Monday backed US suggestions that Saddam Hussein go into exile to avoid military action against Iraq.

"I think it is a very sensible suggestion which we have got to examine," Straw told British Broadcasting Corp. radio.

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said at the weekend that Saddam's flight from Baghdad would be a "fair trade" for avoiding military conflict.

Straw said it would be "unpalatable to see any degree of immunity being offered to the Saddam Hussein regime."

But he said he agreed with Rumsfeld's assessment, adding "if the alternative is a war I think most people would swallow hard and accept that it was in his words a fair trade."

"War is literally a last choice and we want to do everything we can to resolve this issue of Iraq's disarmament of its weapons of mass destruction by peaceful means," Straw added. "But we have to keep turning up the pressure because it's only pressure that Iraq responds to."

The United States and Britain have threatened to use force to disarm Iraq if it does not give up its chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs as required by UN Security Council resolutions.

Iraq maintains it has no banned weapons. Saddam proclaimed on Friday that Iraq was ready for war with the United States.

BBC reported Monday that thousands of British ground troops would be sent to the Gulf in preparation for possible action against Iraq. More than 14,000 troops, with around 150 Challenger 2 battle tanks, were being placed on standby and British armored troops would be stationed in Kuwait by the middle of February, the BBC added.

On "Fox News Sunday," Rumsfeld said Iraq's Arab neighbors were urging Saddam to step down and go into exile in a bid to prevent war. "It would be a good thing for the world if he left," Rumsfeld said.

US Secretary of State Collin Powell said exile would bring about what the United States had sought since the Clinton administration: a change of leadership in Iraq.

"And the challenge before us then would be to see whether or not that new regime would commit itself to eliminating weapons of mass destruction, satisfying the international community that they are interested in the welfare of their people and not in threatening their own people or threatening their neighbors," Powell said.

"And we would have had an entirely new situation presented to the international community, and we might be able to avoid war."

Most of the 15 Security Council members remain opposed to using the military soon, regardless of the contents of a report to the council next Monday by weapons inspectors.

A senior official said Powell was to meet separately with seven ministers, including those of Germany, Mexico and the permanent members China, France and Russia. The official said Powell was trying to agree with his colleagues on a course of action after the Jan. 27 report was in hand.

American and British planes on Sunday bombed eight unmanned sites that are part of Iraq's military air defense command and control system, the US Central Command said in a statement.

The strikes came after Iraqi air defense forces fired anti-aircraft artillery and surface-to-air missiles at coalition planes patrolling the southern no-fly zone over Iraq, according to the statement. *AP*

Showdown talks enter 2nd round

BAGHDAD/WASHINGTON—Chief UN arms inspectors began a second round of showdown talks with Iraq on Monday, pressing ahead with a crucial mission to win more Iraqi cooperation in a hunt for weapons of mass destruction.

Hans Blix and Mohamed ElBaradei met Iraqi disarmament officials, having warned Baghdad that time was running out to provide full cooperation despite its promises of more information on some issues.

Foreign Secretary Jack Straw of Britain, Washington's staunchest supporter on the Iraq issue, told BBC radio on Monday that a November UN Security Council resolution that warned Baghdad of "serious consequences" had to be interpreted as authorizing war if Iraq breached it.

"If there is evidence of a further material breach . . . (it) can only mean military action," Straw said.

Washington on Sunday issued one of its clearest warnings yet to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein that non-cooperation with UN inspectors could be deemed a trigger for a war in the absence of a "smoking gun," or hard evidence of weapons of mass destruction—and that a decision could be just weeks away.

"The test is: Is Saddam Hussein cooperating?" US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told Fox TV. "He's not doing that."

Rumsfeld, presiding over a huge US military buildup of warplanes, ships and tens of thousands of troops in the oil-rich Gulf region, said a final conclusion on Iraqi cooperation could be made "in a matter of weeks, not in months or years."

Chief UN weapons inspector Blix and ElBaradei, head of the UN nuclear watchdog, met Iraqi disarmament officials Amir al-Saadi, President Saddam Hussein's top scientific adviser, and General Hussam Mohammad Amin, head of the Iraqi National Monitoring Directorate. *Reuters*

ANTI-WAR demonstrators march down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington on their way to the White House on Jan. 19. AFP

Demonstrators wrap up weekend of protests

WASHINGTON—Sitting on a frigid street in view of the White House and surrounded by chanting anti-war demonstrators, Sister Carole Bialock ate a cookie and smiled.

"It is a privilege to protest," she said. The 73-year-old Roman Catholic nun from Houston was in Washington for the weekend of demonstrations against a possible war with Iraq.

"Anger has brought me here and sadness that our government has sunk so low and is becoming an empire that is really devastating the world," she said. "I strongly believe in nonviolent protest in the spirit of Gandhi and Martin Luther King."

Many of the approximately 1,000 protesters who rallied Sunday near the White House invoked King's legacy on a weekend of remembrance for the slain civil rights leader.

Heather Williams, 30, of Alexandria, Virginia, held a sign that said: "We still have a dream."

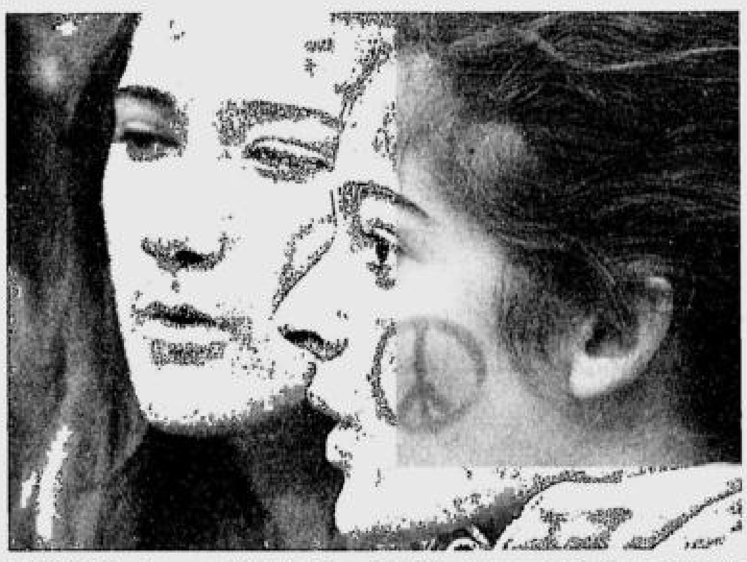
"We don't believe in war," she said. "We don't believe in death and violence."

The demonstration capped a weekend that featured a huge and peaceful rally Saturday and protests around the country and the world.

Although President George W. Bush was at Camp David, Maryland, for the weekend, protesters pressed as close to the White House grounds as they could on Sunday to demand that he back off Iraq. Police swiftly arrested 16 who breached barricades.

Police forced them face down on snowy grass and bound their wrists with plastic handcuffs. They were processed on misdemeanor charges and released.

At one point Sunday, protesters flooded into a street to block traffic; police pushed and dragged them back. In the scuffle, an older woman who was part of the demonstration was pushed over. Ambulance officials said she was one of two people sent to hospitals with minor injuries. The hospital treating the woman said it did not have her permission to release information. *AP*



NAOMI Zuckerman (right), 13, and Liz Vanderpool, 13, sing a protest song along with other anti-war demonstrators outside the FBI building in Washington. AFP

7 suspected terrorists fall in UK raid

LONDON—Police arrested seven terror suspects early Monday after raiding a north London mosque in an operation linked to the recent discovery of the deadly poison ricin, police said.

Eye witnesses said dozens of police officers, some of them with battering rams and ladders, took part in the raid on the North London Central Mosque, which is the base of radical Muslim cleric Abu Hamza al-Masri. Police didn't say whether Al-Masri was one of the people arrested.

"The operation is part of ongoing and extensive inquiries by the Metropolitan Police's Anti-Terrorist Branch into alleged terrorist activity in London and elsewhere in the UK," Scotland Yard police headquarters said in a statement. "Evidence gathered during recent counterterrorist investigations in London and elsewhere has uncovered links between the premises and suspected terrorist activity. Such evidence has made this operation absolutely necessary at this time."

The raid on the mosque in north London's Finsbury Park district and two neighboring houses began at around 2 a.m. Helicopters shone spotlights on the mosque, eye witnesses said, and police were still in the building conducting searches at dawn.

The seven suspects, who were living in the mosque, were arrested under the Terrorism Act 2000 and taken to a central London police station. Police said no "chemical substances" had been found on the premises and there was no risk to the public.

The mosque is widely regarded as a center of radical Islam. Richard C. Reid, who was arrested in December 2001 on a flight from Paris to Miami with explosives in his shoes, reportedly attended the mosque.

Egyptian-born cleric Al-Masri, whose London-based Supporters of Shariah group campaigns for the introduction of Islamic law, preaches at the mosque and has been under police surveillance for months because of his radical, highly politicized speeches. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Libya heads UN rights body

GENEVA—Libya on Monday was elected chair of the UN Human Rights Commission in a vote called for by the United States, which had opposed the nomination. Libyan Ambassador Najat Al-Hajjaji was supported in a secret ballot by 33 members of the 53-nation UN Human Rights Commission, while three countries voted against. Seventeen members abstained. *AFP*

Bin Laden calls for Muslim unity

CAIRO—A statement purportedly written by Sept. 11 prime suspect Osama bin Laden urges Muslims to stop fighting each other and unite against the "crusader coalition" that is attacking the Islamic world. The London-based Arab newspaper Asharq Al-Awsat on Sunday published excerpts of a 26-page statement it claimed was written and signed by Bin Laden, leader of the al-Qaida terror group. The journalist who wrote the article, Mohamed el-Shaf'aie, told The Associated Press on Sunday that the statement was mailed to the paper from an Islamic source in London with close links to a Pakistan-based Islamic research center known for its ties to al-Qaida. *AP*

Chavez threatens to leave peace talks

CARACAS, Venezuela—Calling his adversaries "terrorists," President Hugo Chavez has warned the government could walk out of negotiations with leaders of the seven-week general strike intended to force him from office. In his weekly television call-in show Sunday, Chavez accused strike leaders of "generating chaos, denying the country water and food" as a way to provoke a coup. *AP*

India's 3rd missile test

NEW DELHI—India conducted its third missile test this month on Monday, saying it was routine, while the prime minister accused its nuclear rival Pakistan of being a center for terrorism. Pakistan denies it supports terrorism and says it does not want to participate in an arms race with India. The two neighbors nearly fought a fourth war last year after an Islamic militant attack on the Indian Parliament that Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee said was planned by Pakistan's spy agency. *AP*

North Korea leader receives message from Putin

SEOUL/BEIJING—Reclusive North Korean leader Kim Jong-il on Monday met a Russian envoy who has proposed the communist state give up its nuclear ambitions to defuse a crisis that has gripped capitals from Washington to Beijing.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov was believed to be passing on a verbal message from Russian President Vladimir Putin in the talks at a heavily guarded residence on the northern outskirts of Pyongyang, said Russia's Itar-Tass news agency, one of the few foreign news agencies with a permanent correspondent in secretive North Korea.

US officials cited some progress in easing the nuclear crisis, the latest indication that Washington has moved away from its hard line of "no talks" by ditching a policy of refusing to reward bad behavior by the North now that the standoff has become a distraction from efforts to disarm Iraq.

A senior North Korean diplomat tried to play down fears of conflict on the divided peninsula by saying Pyongyang had no wish to harm South Korea although it would regard any US move to impose sanctions as a declaration of war.

The impasse began in October when Washington said the North had admitted to a secret nuclear weapons program. Pyongyang later kicked out UN nuclear inspectors, removed the seals from a mothballed reactor and pulled out of a global treaty preventing the spread of atomic arms.

"It is to be supposed that the North Korean leader will provide an answer to the initiatives of Russia for settling the crisis on the Korean peninsula," Itar-Tass said.

Russia's Losyukov met officials in Pyongyang at the weekend and presented a set of three proposals that set out that the Korean peninsula be made nuclear-free in exchange for safety guarantees and that economic and humanitarian aid should resume to the impoverished communist North.

Losyukov's trip is part of a flurry of diplomatic initiatives.

US Undersecretary of State John Bolton is in Beijing for what he said would be "a long day of consultations" with Pyongyang's closest ally. He is due in Seoul on Tuesday.

Seoul said it would use meetings this week with Red Cross officials and Cabinet ministers of North Korea to press Pyongyang to end the nuclear impasse. *Reuters*

Polls give Sharon's party large lead

JERUSALEM—Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Likud Party is maintaining a solid lead over its nearest rival, the dovish Labor Party, with just over a week to go before the country's national election, according to a pair of opinion polls published Monday in leading Israeli newspapers.

The surveys appeared a day after Sharon said that European countries were too biased against Israel to serve as a mediator in any renewal of Mideast peace negotiations.

Sharon has repeatedly promised to seek peace and make "painful concessions" if reelected on Jan. 28. But Labor Party leader Amram Mitzna said Sharon's latest comments indicated he was not sincere about reviving peace talks that collapsed after the Palestinians launched an uprising more than two years ago.

Sharon's hawkish party is forecast to win 31 to 33 seats in the 120-member parliament, compared to 19 seats for the Labor Party, according to the polls in two dailies, Maariv and Yediot Ahronot.

Corruption allegations against Sharon earlier this month hurt Likud in several opinion polls, but the numbers had stabilized over the past week or so, and Monday's surveys were in line with other recent polls.

The Labor Party has said it would not join a coalition government led by Sharon. But the surveys indicated Sharon could still cobble together a narrow majority of about 63 seats if extreme-right and religious parties join with Likud. *AP*

Across the NATION

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ROUNDUP

Marijuana uprooted

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Police uprooted more than P17 million worth of marijuana plants and seedlings in three Benguet towns last week. Senior Supt. Conrado Minano, Benguet police director, said policemen destroyed the marijuana plants during an operation in several plantations in Kibungan, Kapangan and Buguias.

Nathan Alcantara, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Korean firm's denial

MARIVELES, Bataan—An official of a Korean firm manufacturing backpacks and travelling bags at the Bataan Economic Zone has denied that about 600 workers of the firm have been on strike since Dec. 16 following the retrenchment of 11 workers. Hyun Seon Choi, Yusung Adventure Corp. marketing manager, said only 60 of the firm's 600 employees are on strike. Choi also belied reports that five people were hurt when police tried to break the picket line of striking workers. But Jane Agbu, secretary of the Yusung employees' union, stood firm on earlier reports that five people were hurt during the strike.

Greg Refraccion, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Support manifesto

BALANGA CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo on Saturday received a manifesto of support from the Bataan Host Lions Club for her decision not to run for the 2004 elections. Carlos Mateo, club president, said they are supporting Ms Macapagal's decision to stay away from politics to preserve peace and unity in the country. Ms Macapagal inducted the club's officers on Saturday during her brief visit here.

Greg Refraccion, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Acting Army chief

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Maj. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, chief of the Northern Luzon Command, was named acting Armed Forces vice chief of staff on Wednesday. A graduate of the Philippine Military Academy Class 1970, Garcia, 54, spent 10 years in Mindanao as a platoon leader. He ended his assignment in Mindanao as commander of the 6th Infantry Division.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Rebel slain

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—A Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan member was killed and another was captured during a gunfight between 20 members of the group that broke off from the New People's Army and 25 government soldiers in Sta. Ana town on Thursday. The slain RHB member was identified only as Ka Pretty while the captured rebel was Romar Salazar. The police's provincial mobile group recovered three M-16 Armalite rifles and a short firearm from the encounter site.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Estafa charges

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The National Bureau of Investigation filed estafa charges against a Subic Bay freeport locator who was arrested for allegedly extorting money in exchange for the release of vehicles. Alfredo Galang, 52, was arrested in an entrapment operation on Jan. 9 after receiving P120,000 in marked money from Pyra Lucas and Yolanda Carreon, both importers of used vehicles and surplus parts. Carreon and Lucas complained that Galang demanded P70,000 each for the release of seven vehicles they imported from Japan. They said Galang used the name of Pampanga Vice Gov. Juan Miguel Arroyo in demanding the money.

Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Vehicles seized

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE—The Bureau of Customs here seized two brand new luxury vehicles and a container van loaded with several bundles of used clothing. The agents found two units of 2002 Mitsubishi Pajeros worth $20,000 whose real values were not declared. Reports showed that the Subic Acropolis Inc., a registered locator of Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, "grossly undervalued" the shipment when it declared it as utility vans worth $13,000. The container van loaded with used clothing was declared as containing a motor vehicle.

Allan Macaluno, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Suspected thief

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—Police arrested a man suspected to be behind a series of thefts in Clark since December last year. Senior Superintendent Restua, Angeles City police chief, identified the suspect as Arnel Samson. Samson had tagged Joseph Sibal, a security guard, as his accomplice in stealing at least 10 central processing units of computers from the state-owned Clark Polytech on Dec. 30, Restua said. Romeo Yusi, owner of the Royal Security Agency, turned over Sibal to Clark security officials on Friday. Restua said six computer units, all worth P258,000, were recovered outside the periphery fence of Clark's ammunition dump.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Church robber arrested

DOLORES, Quezon—Concerned citizens arrested on Monday a suspected illegal drug user while in the act of stealing the church's donations at the Virgin Dolorosa Church here. Police identified the suspect as Francisco Toledo, 29, and resident of Barangay Sto. Cristo, San Jose, Batangas. Recovered from Toledo was the cash stolen from the church amounting to P150.

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

GMA's marching orders to DENR: Review laws that impede mining

TUBA, Benguet—Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun has ordered a review of laws that have impeded the application of the 1995 Philippine Mining Act.

Among these "obstructive laws" are the controversial 1997 Indigenous People's Rights Act (Ipra) and the National Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas) law—both strong civil rights measures that ideally benefit indigenous Filipinos.

Gozun on Saturday said Malacañang wants to determine the provisions in these laws that may be corrected by an administrative order in order to fast track the revitalization of the country's mining industry.

Gozun said the directive is part of her marching orders from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Gozun said Ms Macapagal had decided to offer the mining industry her active support because the industry was one of the few Philippine enterprises that posted a 40-percent growth in 2002.

In 2001, mining growth trailed with a 3.45-percent output, she said.

Ms Macapagal in November scored heavily against the mining industry in a speech that was read for her by former Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez during the National Mine Safety Conference held at the Baguio Country Club.

Ms Macapagal discussed the impact of the Marcopper tragedy on Filipino society, which, she said, had enlightened her about the destructive potentials of an uncontrolled mining trade.

But the President also dared the industry to offer the public tangible evidence that a sustainable and environmentally manageable mining protocol is now in place in order to revitalize majority of the country's top mines, which were abandoned or rendered dormant following the 1997 Asian currency crisis.

Gerald Brimo, chair of the influential Chamber of Mines, said Ms Macapagal's change of heart was "a pleasant surprise." Brimo, who is also president and chair of copper and gold giant Philex Mining Co., was one of the hosts of the November mining conference.

"In the short term—the remaining 17 months of the Macapagal-Arroyo administration—the government hopes to generate $242 million in mining investments from 12 mining projects that will annually yield about $147 million in potential revenues," Gozun said during the annual fiesta in Barangay Sto. Niño inside the Philex Compound.

"While relatively small compared to its potential," Gozun said the government's long-term plans could earn the country $1.8 billion from 10 projects in five years, and $2.15 billion in 10 years.

"In 10 years, the mining industry will be contributing about eight times of what it is now (generating)," she said.

Brimo said 17 months will be a short time to rebuild the country's mines, "but it is a start . . . and a proper step in the right direction." *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Free food downs 210 in Bais; congregation says sorry

By Romy G. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—At least 210 children and mothers were hospitalized in Bais District Hospital in Bais City, some 45 km north of here, after taking meals offered by a religious group Sunday afternoon.

The victims of the suspected food poisoning were from Barangays Tambacan and Talongon, Bais City.

Bais City health officer Dr. Chuchita Villapando told the INQUIRER the children victims, aged two to 10 years old, and at least 10 mothers showed symptoms of food poisoning—vomiting and abdominal pains.

They were earlier treated to a meal by the World of Life (WL), a religious congregation in Bais, under its feeding program for children of its members and non-members.

Pastor Lemuel Belesio of the WL said his congregation served spaghetti, hot dogs, cakes and pieces of bread to 380 children and a few adults in Tambacan and Talongon as a post-Christmas treat.

Belesio said his group has been conducting regular feeding programs in Bais every weekend and this is the first time such an incident took place.

He said sabotage was possible since WL members would not have been negligent in making sure the food was safe.

He said he was shocked and went on to apologize publicly during an interview with radio station dyWC, Radyo Bandilyo Monday morning. He said the congregation would provide whatever help it can afford for the victims' treatment.

Bais City Mayor Hector Villanueva ordered tests conducted on leftover food to determine whether the incident was really a case of food poisoning.

Villanueva said it was premature to discuss whether charges should be filed against WL.

Evelyn Japin, chief nurse of Bais District Hospital told the INQUIRER that as of 1 p.m. Monday, 180 of the patients were already discharged from the hospital. The rest are still confined because of consistent vomiting and stomachaches.

Gunman shoots at legislator's vehicle

By Nestor Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—An unidentified man shot at a vehicle of Antique Rep. Exequiel Javier Sunday night. The lone passenger, Vicente Pacete, Javier's aide, escaped unhurt.

Supt. Rainier Idio, Antique provincial police director, said a bullet from a still undetermined type of handgun hit the right rear tire of the congressman's blue Nissan Patrol sports utility vehicle. The slug was not recovered.

Quoting reports reaching the Antique police, Idio said Pacete was on his way home to Hamtic from Culasi town around 8:25 p.m. when he passed by six men walking by the national road at 8:25 p.m. in Barangay Jinalinan in Barbaza town, north of the capital town of San Jose.

As the vehicle passed by the group, one of the men pulled out a handgun and fired a single shot at the vehicle.

Pacete sped away and reported the incident to the Barbaza police station.

Idio said Pacete did not recognize the suspects only describing the gunman as wearing denim short pants and a blue shirt.

Idio said the motive for the shooting was still unknown although it was possible that the gunman did not know that the vehicle was the congressman's.

Pacete told police no one knew he was taking that route at that time.

Javier said he was in another vehicle in Bugasong, two towns away from Barbaza when the shooting happened.

He said he did not know the motive but did not rule out politics as the reason. "This is the first time that has happened to me," Javier told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

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City Bldg., Quezon City

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Army captures another minor NPA reb after clash

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The military captured a 16-year-old New People's Army rebel after a brief gunfight in Banga town, South Cotabato on Saturday.

Col. Alexander Yano, chief of the Army's 601st Brigade here, said the first encounter was between elements of the Army's 27th Infantry Battalion and some 20 communist rebels led by a certain Ka Bontoy in Sitio Lam-asan, Barangay El Nonok, Banga town at around 6:30 a.m.

The soldiers were scouring the hills when they chanced upon the rebels believed to be responsible for the ambush late last month that wounded Col. Eduardo Andes, battalion commander of the 27th IB.

A reinforcement team from the same unit clashed with the retreating rebels. The gunfire lasted for about 15 minutes, wounding a soldier and a militiaman. Yano said several rebels were injured.

The military recovered an improvised revolver loaded with M-16 bullets and rebel documents.

The 16-year-old NPA rebel is now in the custody of the 27th IB.

The United Nations Children's Fund said in a recent study that about 75,000 child soldiers were serving in the Philippines and other parts of Asia-Pacific. The study cited interviews with former child combatants of the NPA and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. *Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Pentagon gang eludes military, again

KIDAPAWAN CITY—The Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom group has successfully slipped out of last week's military dragnet in Columbio, Sultan Kudarat.

The group even struck again while soldiers were busy hunting its members and their allies in the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in Barangay Polomolok in Columbio until late Sunday.

At least 60 bandits led by Magtanggol Alonto, a brother of Pentagon leader Tahir Alonto, were sighted in the Christian-dominated town of President Roxas in North Cotabato.

Alonto was being blamed for the disappearance and the execution of a businessman from M'lang, North Cotabato in 1999.

Gov. Emmanuel Piñol has confirmed the presence of Alonto and his men in Barangay Kisupaan.

President Roxas Mayor Jaime Mahimpit also confirmed the report.

He said locals reported to him that last week, armed men were seen in the area with two "captives" in tow.

However, Mahimpit said they have no idea as to the identities of the victims. He also could not say whether the hostages were male or female.

Man and woman

But in Davao City, the Mindanao People's Caucus (MPC), a non-government organization involved in efforts to attain peace in Mindanao, said the victims were a man and a woman, "both of whom are of Chinese descent."

The MPC said its information came from Moro and leaders of indigenous communities in the area.

Mahimpit said the kidnappers have found "refuge" in the area of MILF leader Commander Tahonting.

Tahonting, he said, had established "good" relationships with residents in the area until the kidnappers arrived.

Piñol said Alonto's group entered President Roxas by moving upstream through the Pulangi River.

As this developed, MPC urged the MILF to "adequately and appropriately intervene in its own area" or renewed military operation would be inevitable.

Assault

"There is good reason and recent precedent (Columbio) to suggest that a military operation will result in massive evacuation from President Roxas . . . Already there are reports that civilians are moving out of the area in anticipation of a military assault," MPC said in a statement distributed in Davao City. *Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
CEBU	5J - 557	Daily	DC9	0130	0240	P2,199*	P4,398*	P1,849	P3,698
	5J - 559	Daily	DC9	0500	0610	P2,569	P5,138		
	5J - 561	Daily	DC9	0700	0810				
	5J - 563	Daily	DC9	0900	1010				
	5J - 565	Daily	DC9	1100	1210				
	5J - 567	Daily	DC9	1300	1410				
	5J - 577	Wed/Sat	B757	1325	1435				
	5J - 569	Daily	DC9	1500	1610				
	5J - 571	Daily	DC9	1700	1810				
DAVAO	5J - 961	Daily	DC9	0500	0640	P3,239	P6,478	P2,288	P4,576
	5J - 963	Daily	DC9	0930	1110				
	5J - 965	Daily	DC9	1320	1500				
	5J - 967	Daily	DC9	1540	1720				
CAGAYAN de ORO	5J - 381	Daily	DC9	0510	0635	P3,239	P6,478	P2,349	P4,698
	5J - 383	Daily	DC9	0900	1025				
TACLOBAN	5J - 651	Daily	DC9	0610	0720	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998
	5J - 655	Daily	DC9	1210	1320				
ILOILO	5J - 451	Daily	DC9	0500	0600	P2,449	P4,898	P1,599	P3,198
	5J - 453	Daily	DC9	0620	0720				
	5J - 455	Daily	DC9	0955	1055				
	5J - 459	Daily	DC9	1600	1700				
BACOLOD	5J - 473	Daily	DC9	0510	0610	P2,449	P4,898	P1,799	P3,598
	5J - 475	Daily	DC9	1000	1100				
	5J - 479	Daily	DC9	1650	1750				
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 851	Daily	DC9	0520	0650	P3,239	P6,478	P2,079	P4,158
ROXAS	5J - 373	Daily	DC9	0530	0630	P2,199	P4,398	P1,799	P3,598
DUMAGUETE	5J - 627	Daily	DC9	1300	1410	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998
KALIBO	5J - 339	Daily	DC9	0950	1040	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998
BUTUAN	5J - 787	Daily	DC9	0900	1025	P3,239	P6,478	P2,349	P4,698
SUBIC	5J - 102	Th/Sun	B757	1210	1240	P500	P999	-	-

* Promotional Value Fare

ORIGIN: CEBU

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 556	Th/Sun	B757	0300	0410	P2,199*	P4,398*	-	-
	5J - 558	Daily	DC9	0400	0510	P2,199*	P4,398*	P1,849	P3,698
	5J - 560	Daily	DC9	0700	0810	P2,569	P5,138		
	5J - 562	Daily	DC9	0900	1010				
	5J - 564	Daily	DC9	1100	1210				
	5J - 566	Daily	DC9	1300	1410				
	5J - 568	Daily	DC9	1500	1610				
	5J - 570	Daily	DC9	1700	1810				
	5J - 572	Daily	DC9	1900	2010				
DAVAO	5J - 593	Daily	DC9	0800	0850	P2,249	P4,498	P1,649	P3,298
	5J - 597	Daily	DC9	1450	1540				
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 431	M/W/F/Sat	DC9	0905	1000	P2,319	P4,638	P1,969	P3,938
ILOILO	5J - 164	Daily	DC9	1750	1825	P1,759	P3,518	P1,249	P2,498
BACOLOD	5J - 126	Daily	DC9	0810	0840	P1,539	P3,078	P 999	P1,998

* Promotional Value Fare

ORIGIN: DAVAO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 962	Daily	DC9	0720	0900	P3,239	P6,478	P2,288	P4,576
	5J - 964	Daily	DC9	1210	1350				
	5J - 966	Daily	DC9	1540	1720				
	5J - 968	Daily	DC9	1800	1940				
CEBU	5J - 594	Daily	DC9	0930	1020	P2,249	P4,498	P1,649	P3,298
	5J - 598	Daily	DC9	1620	1710				
ILOILO –via Cebu	5J - 598/164	Daily	DC9	1620	1825	P3,195	P6,390	P2,199	P4,398
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 393	Tu/Th/Sun	DC9	0910	1010	P2,319	P4,638	P2,049	P4,098

ORIGIN: DUMAGUETE

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 628	Daily	DC9	1450	1600	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998

ORIGIN: BACOLOD

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 474	Daily	DC9	0920	1020	P2,449	P4,898	P1,799	P3,598
	5J - 476	Daily	DC9	1150	1250				
	5J - 480	Daily	DC9	1840	1940				
CEBU	5J - 125	Daily	DC9	0700	0730	P1,539	P3,078	P999	P 1,998

ORIGIN: BUTUAN

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 788	Daily	DC9	1115	1240	P3,239	P6,478	P2,349	P4,698

ORIGIN: ILOILO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 454	Daily	DC9	0800	0900	P2,449	P4,898	P1,599	P3,198
	5J - 456	Daily	DC9	1135	1235				
	5J - 460	Daily	DC9	1740	1840				
	5J - 462	Daily	DC9	1905	2005				
CEBU	5J - 161	Daily	DC9	0640	0715	P1,759	P3,518	P1,249	P2,498
DAVAO –via Cebu	5J - 161/593	Daily	DC9	0640	0850	P3,195	P6,390	P2,199	P4,398

ORIGIN: TACLOBAN

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 652	Daily	DC9	0800	0910	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998
	5J - 656	Daily	DC9	1400	1510				

ORIGIN: ZAMBOANGA

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 852	Daily	DC9	1050	1220	P3,239	P6,478	P2,079	P4,158
CEBU	5J - 432	M/W/F/Sat	DC9	0730	0825	P2,319	P4,638	P1,969	P3,938
DAVAO	5J - 394	Tu/Th/Sun	DC9	0730	0830	P2,319	P4,638	P2,049	P4,098

ORIGIN: ROXAS

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 374	Daily	DC9	0710	0810	P2,199	P4,398	P1,799	P3,598

ORIGIN: CAGAYAN DE ORO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 382	Daily	DC9	0715	0840	P3,239	P6,478	P2,349	P4,698
	5J - 384	Daily	DC9	1105	1230				

ORIGIN: KALIBO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 340	Daily	DC9	1120	1210	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998

ORIGIN: SUBIC

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 103	Th/Sun	B757	2330	2400	P500	P999	-	-

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

FROM	- TO	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD*	ETA*
MANILA	- HONGKONG	5J - 110	Daily	B757/DC9	0700	0900
		5J - 118	Daily	B757/DC9	1640	1840
HONG KONG	- MANILA	5J - 111	Daily	B757/DC9	1000	1200
		5J - 119	Daily	B757/DC9	1940	2140
MANILA	- SEOUL	5J - 194	Mon	B757	1340	1840
		5J - 1944	Fri	B757	1340	1840
CEBU	- SEOUL	5J - 128	Wed	B757	1535	2115
		5J - 1288	Sat	B757	1535	2115
SUBIC	- SEOUL	5J - 196	Th	B757	1340	1840
		5J - 1966	Sun	B757	1340	1840
SEOUL	- MANILA	5J - 195	Mon	B757	1955	2250
		5J - 1955	Fri	B757	1955	2250
SEOUL	- CEBU	5J - 129	Wed	B757	2225	0155
		5J - 1299	Sat	B757	2225	0155
SEOUL	- SUBIC	5J - 197	Th	B757	1955	2250
		5J - 1977	Sun	B757	1955	2250

*Local Time

NOTES:
- 2-Day Advance Purchase fares are subject to CAB approval and may change without prior notice. Limited seats only.
- All tickets are REFUNDABLE, REROUTABLE and UPGRADABLE to valid higher fare types. All issued tickets are NON-TRANSFERRABLE.
- Insurance surcharge of P250 per sector is applicable to all fare types.
- Child's fare and other regular discounts are applicable to Normal Fares only.
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Cops keep militants out of Edsa II rites

From page A1

rites, recalling that civil society groups were not barred from holding a series of rallies at the Edsa Shrine that led to the ouster of then President Joseph Estrada.

"Why are they doing this? We have an open invitation from Msgr. (Francisco) Soc Villegas. We don't need any permit," he told the policemen.

At the height of the pushing and shoving, the two camps came to blows, with the protesters whipping the policemen with the handles of their banners and the policemen beating them back with their shields and sticks. More than 20 people were injured.

Water cannons

At the same time, policemen fired water cannons from two fire trucks parked underneath the MRT station in front of Camp Crame, forcing the demonstrators to retreat a few paces.

Some policemen were seen pushing their shields hard against a disoriented Dizon and Maza, prompting one to shout:

"He's a priest, he is a priest! You have no respect for the law, for religion!" an irate and drenched Maza later told the policemen.

After a few minutes, the protesters, with Bayan secretary general Teodoro "Teddy" Casiño on the frontline, tried anew to push their way through the human barricade put up by the policemen.

But the policemen did not budge, pushing the protesters back and trading blows with them. Shortly after, the melee subsided. The protesters decided to hold a program, where representatives from each group was given a turn to speak atop a mini-truck.

The crowd, however, were further outraged when the police later allowed the passage of a convoy of about 10 cars apparently headed for the Edsa Shrine. The vehicles carried streamers bearing pro-administration messages.

"The police have no moral or political high ground to justify their decision to block us," Bayan's Dr. Carol Pagaduan-Araullo said. "The purpose of a permit is purely ministerial. But a permit should not define the rights of the people."

The program lasted until 2:40 p.m., causing traffic gridlock along the south-bound lane of Edsa for hours. After the program, the protesters peacefully dispersed.

Automatic rifles

Some 1,000 members of militant groups on board some 15 jeepneys had also wanted to proceed to the Edsa Shrine but were stopped on the north-bound lane of the Ortigas flyover by riot policemen and members of a SWAT team armed with automatic rifles.

The activists, who converged on Ayala Avenue in Makati City and later on Julia Vargas Avenue in Mandaluyong City, had come all the way from Southern Tagalog.

At the Ninoy Aquino monument in Makati, the rally was highlighted by some 50 "circus performers" vilifying the President's anti-poor programs.

A masked actor portraying Ms Macapagal was made to jump in loops marked as government programs such as the Operation Gordian Knot and Purchased Power Adjustment, while the actor ignored people's issues such as respect for human rights, decrease in prices of commodities, and national sovereignty.

"This street circus resembles the current play in Malacañang," Edwin Alog, Bayan-ST deputy secretary general.

Dizon, who suffered a bruise in the right wrist during the dispersal, denounced the President for stopping them from attending Mass at the shrine.

"You have no moral ground to unite people because you are the cause of disunity," he said in a speech atop a mini-truck, referring to Ms Macapagal's earlier call for unity to all sectors of society.

The banner-waving protesters marched from Cubao for the Mass but stopped before the phalanx of policemen who were posted before the MRT station in Camp Crame at around 11:30 a.m.

During a huddle with the leaders, Senior Supt. Rosendo Franco, ground commander of the anti-riot policemen, said the marchers could not proceed to the shrine because they had no permit.

This angered some of the leaders, who insisted that they did not need to secure a permit to go to the shrine.

"Is this a happy anniversary? This is a lonely anniversary because Ms Macapagal is there at the shrine alone while the people are here on the streets fighting," Casiño said during a brief program before the clash.

"She is celebrating with the bootlickers—politicians, military and police officials, and some members of the civil society," he added.

Sanlakas rally

Casiño said the Edsa II revolt was a victory for the civil society groups that called for the resignation of Estrada and succeeded in ousting him amid charges of corruption. "It's a priceless victory," he said.

"The reason the President stopped us from going to the shrine was that she feared the people's wrath; she feared being ousted before 2004," he said.

Unlike the violent protests at the Edsa Shrine, Sanlakas and its allied organizations held alternative Edsa II commemoration rites at the Don Chino Roces Bridge (formerly Mendiola) in Manila.

"The two-year-old promises of Edsa Dos await fulfillment. There is nothing significant lying underneath People Power II because the ruling elite, in their greed for too much powers, has triumphantly nullified the truest intent of Edsa by continuously preserving the 'trapo identity' of the government," said Sanlakas leader JV Bautista.

"It's sad because another president, in the person of one Joseph Estrada must be ousted to demonstrate that the current system is the root cause of our perennial problem. It's not enough to change the King. We have to free his kingdom's slaves," he said.

More than 100 members of Sanlakas, Kongres ng Pagkakaisa ng mga Maralita sa Lungsod, Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino and Kampi held a rally at the foot of the historic bridge.

In Baguio City, a church leader criticized the government's decision to prevent veterans of Edsa II from joining the anniversary rites at the Edsa Shrine.

"This is not a very open celebration. I was in Manila during Edsa II. In fact, I was at the Edsa Shrine together with (popular actress) Nora (Aunor) and Osang (Rosanna Roces)," said Bishop Allan Ray Sarte of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) North Luzon jurisdiction.

Sarte, a key figure in the mobilization of the Baguio leg of the Oust Estrada Movement, said this situation showed how the President had fractured the Edsa II agenda.

He and some 150 of Baguio's "People Power heroes" turned the city celebration of Edsa II into an anti-war rally aimed at Ms Macapagal's expected support of the impending war of the United States against Iraq and her position on constitutional amendments.

In Iloilo City, some 2,000 people led by Bayan marched through the main streets to commemorate the Edsa II revolt.

They carried red streamers and placards denouncing the President as a "traitor" to Edsa II.

The protest was joined by urban poor groups as well as farmers, students, workers and religious groups. They converged at the Rotary Amphitheater where a cultural program was held. *With reports from Philip Tubeza in Manila; Vincent Cabreza and Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Clarice Colting, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; and Nesto P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau*

Attend . . .

From page A1

the Filipino people.

"And I encourage every Filipino family to attend the festive meeting because the future of humanity passes by way of the family," the Papal Legate continued.

The 4th World Meeting of Families begins tomorrow and ends on Sunday. This is the first time that Asia is hosting the meeting, held every three years.

The Pope was expected to attend the event but canceled his trip late last year for health reasons.

Trujillo was welcomed at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport yesterday by Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin and Papal Nuncio Antonio Franco.

Security is expected to be a top concern during the event, because it involves large outdoor gatherings and an open-air Mass.

ARCHBISHOPS Jaime Cardinal Sin (left) and Antonio Franco (middle) welcome Alfonso Cardinal Lopez Trujillo, appointed by Pope John Paul II as Papal Legate to the 4th World Meeting of Families upon his arrival at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. ROGER MARGALLO

Security system

The Philippine National Police yesterday said security preparations were more than adequate, and were actually fit for a pope.

"Yes we can say that," said Chief Supt. Vidal Querol, police director for operations. "[But] that would be a little bit scaled down than if the Pope would be here. It would be a different story if the Pope would be here," he added.

Querol also allayed fears of some foreign delegates that it was unsafe to come to Manila because of reports about continuing terror threats.

Reports that some foreign delegates have canceled their trips swirled Monday.

But Trujillo said he was satisfied about the security preparations.

"We are very, very happy because really, this meeting is for all the world, a message of hope," he told reporters.

Querol said thousands of policemen would be deployed at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City and the Quirino Grandstand in Manila, the main venues of the gathering, starting tomorrow.

The military, for its part, would provide additional forces and even teams of bomb-sniffing dogs, he said.

The Police Security and Protection Office (PSPO), headed by Chief Supt. Prospero Noble, would provide security details to the foreign delegates throughout the five-day meet, he added.

Apart from the PICC and the Quirino Grandstand, policemen would be fielded at several churches around Metro Manila where Masses for Americans, Asians, Africans, Australians and Europeans would be held.

"We have not monitored any credible or specific threats, but we have prepared a security adequate enough to respond to a less than good incident so that we won't be caught off-guard," he said.

During a papal visit to Manila in 1995, Philippine security officials foiled a plot by a group of foreign Muslim extremists to assassinate the Pontiff. About 5 million Filipinos had welcomed the Pope in one of the largest such ceremonies.

Querol said he has not received reports about the decision of some delegates to cancel their attendance at the meet. *With a report from AP*

Estrada belittles new GMA campaign

From page A1

Estrada belittled the President's new anti-corruption initiative.

"[It's] pleasant to the ears, [but] the unpleasant fact is that the country is now perceived as one of the most corrupt in the world courtesy of the presidency," Estrada said.

He was alluding to the Transparency International report that ranked the Philippines as the "11th most corrupt country in the world." Estrada is facing plunder and other charges before the Sandiganbayan, the country's anti-graft court.

The President's renewed call against graft "rung hollow," Estrada said in a statement, because of her "continued protection" of resigned Justice Secretary Hernando Perez and former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson.

Perez has been accused by the Estrada camp of pocketing $2 million in connection with the controversial Impsa power contract. Singson, who enjoys immunity from suit as a star witness in the Estrada plunder trial, has been repeatedly sued for graft by critics from his province.

GMA's betrayal?

Estrada noted that the second anniversary of Edsa II only saw "former allies" of Ms Macapagal now calling for her ouster and accusing her of "betrayal."

The premise that he was ousted from power "for the sake of good governance," Estrada said, was "put to lie" by the controversies that hounded his successor.

Estrada was forced to step down two years ago in the wake of massive military-backed protests, after senators allied with him blocked the introduction of key evidence in his Senate impeachment trial.

Yesterday, even Estrada's court-appointed defense lawyers denounced Edsa II.

"It should not have happened," said Noel Malaya, one of his counsels *de oficio*.

"I used to be apolitical," he said, "but I've learned a lot after being given this case. And that is, all the evidence put together against [Estrada] are wrong."

"I believe he is really innocent," Malaya told the INQUIRER.

Irene Jurado, another defense lawyer, said she was "never convinced of Estrada's guilt even during his impeachment trial."

"That's why I never joined any movement connected with Edsa II," said Jurado.

Since their appointment by the Sandiganbayan as Estrada's counsels *de oficio* after the deposed President fired his private lawyers in protest over the perceived bias of the judiciary, Jurado said: "We've had a better view of the matter. The public, unfortunately, remained not as well-informed because of the many technical matters involved."

Jurado said ousting Estrada and later prosecuting him "was a very erroneous move on the part of the segment of the population that went to Edsa."

No comment

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye declined to comment on the impeachment initiative, which accused the President of "culpable violation of the Constitution, bribery, graft and corrupt practices, and betrayal of the public trust."

Enrile and Tatad's group accused Ms Macapagal of "soliciting and accepting gifts" from Mark Jimenez, the congressman who was extradited to the United States last month to stand trial for fraud and tax evasion.

They also charged that Ms Macapagal spent P470 million for a rural electrification project that was not approved by Congress.

Impeachment initiatives have scant chance of prospering unless congressional allies desert the incumbent in droves, as happened to Estrada in late 2000 when he was impeached for allegedly taking bribes from illegal gambling rackets, as well as other charges. *With an AFP report*

GMA releases ₱2.5B for poll computerization

From page A1

so to prevent the election of those who cheat.

"We must ensure the election of the people's real choices. We must protect the votes of those who run on the strength of their public service rather than on the force of their private wealth," she said.

Ms Macapagal again put her foot down on speculations that she would somehow find a way to extend her term beyond 2004.

"My interest in the 2004 elections is to promise that it will take place and (that) it will be utterly clean," said Ms Macapagal, who had said that she would not run next year.

Besides computerized elections, Filipinos may also get a clean voters' list.

There are more than 30 million registered voters in the country, but Elections Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco had insisted that the voters' list was padded due to the huge increase in the number of voters after every general registration.

Bent on "cleansing the voters' list," the Commission on Elections has suspended the continuing registration of voters in preparation for the nationwide validation of the list.

The Comelec en banc issued Resolution No. 5912 ordering all election officers to stop accepting new registrants and processing applications "until further orders from the Commission."

Signed by all seven commissioners on Jan. 15, the resolution also banned the transfer of all registration records and suspended the quarterly meetings of the election registration boards.

The poll body is set to conduct a nationwide validation of voters registration as part of its modernization program "soon."

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. earlier said the validation of voters' list in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao would start on the third week of March.

Validation would require the voter to personally appear before the election officer, undergo electronic fingerprinting and digital photography, which would be stored in machines.

Abalos said the Comelec would get bids from suppliers of the machines next month and kick off the information campaign on electronic registration.

No violent dispersal in Erap's time?

From page A1

used truncheons, water cannons and tear gas to beat back about 3,000 demonstrators who tried to march to the site of the January 2001 Edsa II that forced Estrada to flee Malacañang and swept then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the presidency.

"Never have I ordered police to violently suppress our people's right to freely express themselves as this is guaranteed by the Bill of Rights," said the 65-year-old Estrada who is facing trial for plunder.

His 21-month detention at the hospital must have taken a heavy toll on Estrada's memory. It was during the short-lived Estrada presidency that police began to crack down on anti-government demonstrators, abandoning its longstanding policy of "maximum tolerance" and enforcing instead the "no permit, no rally" policy.

During Estrada's State of the Nation Address on July 24, 2000, for instance, hundreds of policemen broke up a small protest rally outside the Batasan complex. Scores of protesters, including priests and nuns, were hurt during the dispersal operation. At least 27 protesters were arrested.

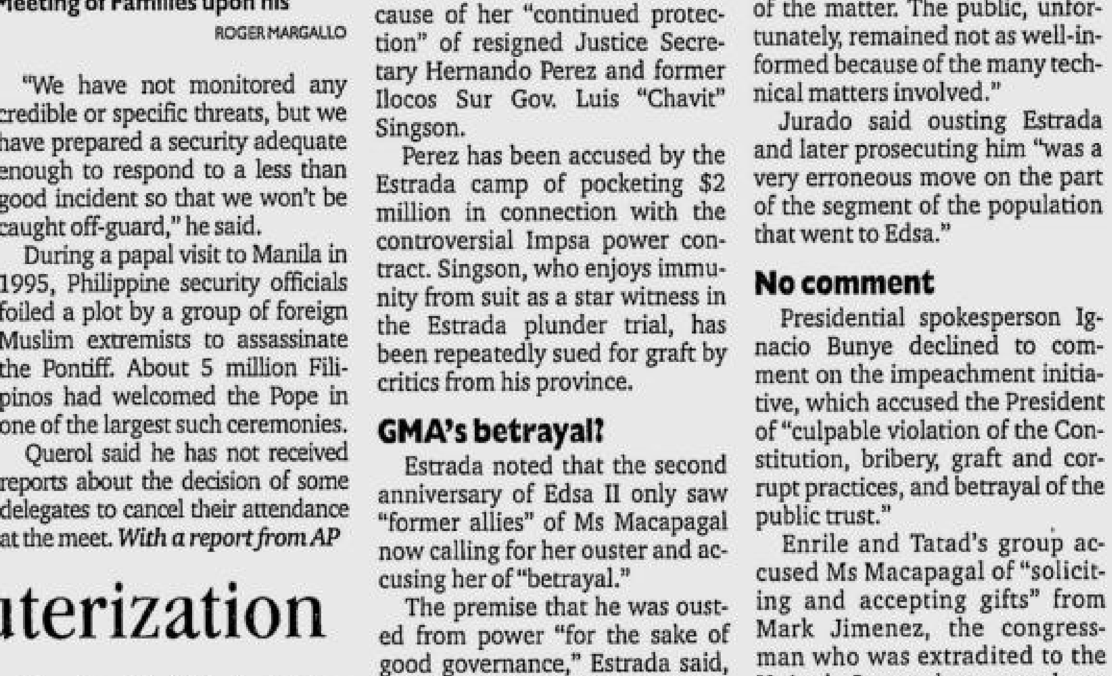
"It was overdone. Many people were hurt. There were even policemen who threw flying kicks. How many times does one have to hit another person before he stops?" Msgr. Hernando Coronel of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines was quoted as saying then.

"A national tragedy," then Human Rights Commissioner Aurora Reciña added.

Police also dispersed protest rallies in similar fashion on Nov. 8 and Nov. 24 in 1999, and on Jan. 27, May 1 and Nov. 14 in 2000.

Now, however, Estrada's heart bleeds for those protesters who are beaten up by overzealous cops during the Macapagal administration.

"Such unhesitating use of state violence against legitimate dissent (is only) sowing social division," the jailed ex-President said while, at the same time, scoffing at Ms Macapagal's calls for "national healing and reconciliation."



DEMONSTRATORS opposing the proposed Visiting Forces Agreement were dispersed in front of the Senate building during the Estrada administration.. PDI PHOTO

FOUR DIGIT
1 5 6 6
(In exact order)

SUERTRES
6 8 5

MEGALOTTO 6/45
6 8 9 13 24 35

SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Al S. Mendoza ● Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

Sumo wrestler Takanohana retires

TOKYO—Already reeling from a decline in popularity and a scarcity of young stars, Japan's ancient sport of sumo took another hit Monday as Takanohana, one of its greatest wrestlers ever, announced he will retire. The 183-cm, 150-kg wrestler, who was born Koji Hanada, told the Japan Sumo Association that he is quitting the sport.

₱11.4M FOR 3 YEARS

Laure inks richest rookie contract

By June Navarro

AND the most lucrative rookie deal of the year goes to Eddie Laure.

The 6-foot-3 Laure, selected third overall by Shell during the PBA rookie draft, yesterday came to terms with the Turbo Chargers worth P11.4 million spread over three years.

Laure's contract topped the three-year pay checks of top pick Mike Cortez of Alaska and second overall choice Romel Adducul of Barangay Ginebra.

The 6-foot-6 Adducul has signed a four-year deal worth P12.7 million but will only receive a total P8.5 million in wages on his third year. Cortez, a former La Salle star point guard, secured an P8.7-million, three-year pact with the Aces.

Shell team manager Bobby Kanapi declined to divulge the figures involved but sources said Laure, 2001 MVP of the now-defunct MBA, would get a little over P200,000 on his first year.

A corresponding 50-percent increase awaits Laure next year before the Turbo Chargers grant him the maximum allowable monthly salary of P350,000 in 2005.

"Kailangang patunayan ko na tama ang binigay na kontrata ng Shell sa akin. (I have to prove that I'm worthy of such contract)," said the 25-year-old Laure, the best amateur cager to come out of Adamson University since Kenneth Duremdes.

Laure will fill the power forward spot in the offensive rotation of Shell coach Perry Ronquillo. He will join Chris Jackson, Tony Dela Cruz and Mike Hrabak in manning the slot for the Turbo Chargers.

Shell also hired the services of former La Salle slotman Adonis Sta. Maria and UE swingman Ronald Tubid. Both signed three-year contracts worth P5 million each.

Cagers join rally vs VAT

By June Navarro

THE IMPOSITION of the 10-percent value added tax (Vat) on the income of athletes has gotten the ire of PBA players and coaches, who stand to give up 30 percent of their earnings to the government coffers once the law takes effect.

PBA players, particularly the Sta. Lucia Realty team, yesterday took their clamor to the streets and sought an audience at the Senate to seek the scrapping of the added tax on professionals earning talent or consultancy fees.

Clad in black shirts, PBA superstars Kenneth Duremdes, Dennis Espino, Marlou Aquino and the rest of the Realtors, including SLR coach Alfrancis Chua, joined hands with some 500 show biz personalities, entertainers, doctors, accountants, lawyers and their fellow athletes decrying the debilitating impact of the Vat.

The tax was required under a 1997 law but its application to professionals, athletes included, was deferred for five years by a subsequent law that expired on Dec. 31, 2002.

"With the added tax expected to eat up a large portion of our salaries, it will mean higher cost of living," said the 28-year-old Duremdes.

Also present in the rally were Sta. Lucia Realtors Gerard Francisco, Francis Adriano, Chito Victolero, Richard Del Rosario, Long David and Wilmer Ong, whom the Realtors acquired from Barangay Ginebra.

Malbarosas top qualifiers

THE HUSBAND-AND-WIFE tandem of Salvador and Neneng Malbarosa shared the spotlight with record-breaker Mario Parinas as they led the final batch of qualifiers from the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club leg of the Samsung Putting Challenge over the weekend.

Salvador, known as SP to friends, clinched a seniors slot while his wife Neneng made it as a ladies winner to catch the last tickets for the finals at the same Wack Wack club where SP is the general manager on Feb. 1.

Parinas ended the eliminations in style, submitting a scorecard dotted with one-putts which led him to a tournament best 11 strokes and runaway winner of the men's category.

The other qualifiers were Arman Enema (14), Juan Cusing (14) and Edsel Dagdagan (14) for the men's side; Sherwin Andrada (14) and Jenz Tecson (16) in the jungolf category; Lucio Rodriguez (14) in seniors play and Nancy Ortiga (17) as the other ladies winner.

HANTUCHOVA: Supermodel looks.

AFP

Venus, Daniela clash anew

MELBOURNE, Australia—Daniela Hantuchova has already proved she is more than just a pretty face - now she wants to hammer home the point.

The Slovakian seventh seed enters a daunting Australian Open quarter-final with mighty Venus Williams here Tuesday in a replay of last year's three-set third-round battle.

Hantuchova's gutsy performance 12 months ago - she lost 3-6, 6-0, 6-4 - served as springboard for a successful 2002, the 19-year-old winning her first title and reaching the Wimbledon and US Open quarterfinals.

But her supermodel looks and occasional appearances on the catwalks of European fashion shows have meant that the media spotlight has not always focused on Hantuchova's tennis.

Hantuchova is irritated by being tagged as 'a new Anna Kournikova'.

Once again, Serena Williams had a slow start but a strong finish, moving within three victories of capturing the Australian Open championship and a "Serena Slam."

Williams, who already holds the most recent titles from the French Open, Wimbledon and US Open, beat Eleni Daniilidou 6-4, 6-1 Monday.

Her quarterfinal opponent will be fellow American Meghann Shaughnessy, who saved five break points in the final game to beat Elena Bovina 5-7, 6-2, 6-4.

Andre Agassi will try to veer away from Sebastien Grosjean's big forehands as he chases a semifinal place in the men's division on Tuesday.

The 32-year-old American second seed has the French number one blocking his path to his fifth semifinal in seven Australian Opens.

Meanwhile, a fist-pumping Andy Roddick produced a stirring comeback on Monday, the ninth seed beating Russian Davis Cup hero Mikhail Youzhny 6-7, 3-6, 7-5, 6-3, 6-2 to reach the quarterfinals.

Olivarez reviving net 'grand slam'

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PHILIPPINE Tennis Association chair Pablo Olivarez is set to revive the country's version of the "tennis grand slam" with the staging of three tennis open tournaments which stake a total of P600,000 in prizes this year.

Olivarez, the former Parañaque mayor, said the three events will serve as the foundation of the Philta's development program fully supported by Philta president Buddy Andrada.

Kicking off the series is the Philta Open-Chairman's Cup to be held this March, followed by the National Open in August and the Metro Open in December.

All of the tournaments will be held at the world-class Olivarez indoor courts in Parañaque City.

The events will be for the country's top netters like Joseph Victorino, Czarina Mae Arevalo, Patricia Santos, Adelo Abadia, Michael Mora III and Johnny Arcilla, and their counterparts from neighboring countries.

"Though I'm personally bankrolling the event just to bring back these tournaments, we are also inviting private sponsors to come in and realize how serious we are in developing tennis in the country," said Olivarez.

The three flagship tourneys will also be backed by age-group and interclub tourneys which are synchronized with the plans and programs of the Philta, according to the former mayor.

"Our national players need tournaments that they can look forward to all season and as chair of the Philta, I will try to give them the exposure they need," added Olivarez.

Olivarez added: "I believe we have far better players than we had back then. I just want to harness them through tournaments like these."

Hingis can play—Doc

HINGIS

ZURICH, Switzerland—Former world number one Martina Hingis's ankle injury should not end her career, the surgeon who operated on the problem said on Sunday.

Zurich surgeon Heinz Buehlmann performed surgery on Hingis's ankle in May last year but said in an interview with Sontags Blick newspaper that the problem had healed perfectly.

Buehlmann added that providing Hingis, who last week said she feared she could be forced to retire, could train through an initial pain barrier the 22-year-old would return to the world stage.

"Martina can play again," said Buehlmann, who said the five-time Grand Slam winner is suffering from inflammation of her left foot.

Els, kid talk

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

ANYTIME you sink a putt from 55 feet, you ought to win the tournament.

Ernie Els did just that yesterday when it appeared he had lost the Sony Open in Hawaii.

He had missed the green on the 10th. Only by sinking that 55-footer did he have a chance at the crown.

He did. And Els became the first player in 14 years to win the first two legs of the season.

He was destined to win it.

"The wheel keeps turning," said Els moments after his playoff victory over Aaron Baddeley, the Australian Tour rookie.

Last year, Els lost the Mercedes Open when Tiger Woods rammed home a 40-footer in the playoff.

Last week, Els won the Mercedes Open, posting one of the biggest winning margins ever--but Woods wasn't also around as he is still recuperating from a knee surgery.

The world started noticing Baddeley when, as an 18-year-old three years ago, he won the Australian Open that had the eminent Colin Montgomerie and Greg Norman in attendance.

In the Sony Open serving as his Tour debut, the 21-year-old Baddeley stunned the star-studded field with his veteran-like nerves. He was actually being hailed the most probable winner until Els sank that 55-foot putt.

But Baddeley lost it with his head unbowed. And he surrendered the ghost only after he missed a 20-foot putt on the same hole, the ball resting on the lip.

That missed putt was worth $810,000–the champion's prize that went to Els.

Earlier, when instant defeat stared him in the face in regulation play, Baddeley gunned down a 12-footer on 18 to forge the playoff.

The kid bears watching. Mark this: In the US Masters, he'll be a force to reckon with.

He can even start winning before the Masters is held in April.

SPORTSTV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - LA Clippers vs LA Lakers, 11 a.m. (r - 10 p.m.), Solar Sports

World Pro Basketball Challenge, 5:30 p.m. (r), ESPN

TENNIS: Australian Open, 2 p.m., Solar Sports

POOL: Rack 'Em Up 2, 1 p.m. and 9 p.m. (r), Star Sports

Mosconi Cup 2002, 7 p.m., ESPN

BOWLING: USA vs Europe Tenpin Bowling 2002, 12:30 p.m., ESPN

CGU Asian Bowling Tour, 11 p.m. (r), Star Sports

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: NFL Conference Championship Game, 8:30 p.m. (r), ESPN

TENNIS: Madrid 2012 Masters Highlights, 10 p.m. (r), Star Sports

VOLLEYBALL: Volley International 2002, 2p.m., Star Sports

SOCCER: EPL, 7 a.m. (r), Star Sports, Highlights, 11:30 a.m., ESPN, 5 p.m., Star Sports

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1991, Mario Castro clocked 2 hours, 25 minutes and 55 seconds to rule the 10th Philippine Airlines-Manila Marathon at the Quirino Grandstand. Also today in 1992, Antonio Avancena notched 85 points to win the overall indivual title and power Matina Davao II to the overall team plum in the 6th Rotary golf tournament at the Negros Occidental course

Miñoza sentimental pick at home turf

CAGAYAN DE ORO—A big disappointment last week in Davao, Frankie Miñoza will be on a different mission as he again sets out as the sentimental favorite in the eighth leg of the First Gentleman's Professional Golf Circuit starting today at the Pueblo del Oro course here.

Pueblo will host its first ever professional event and the appearance of Miñoza and his brothers Peter and Raul who are all members of the exclusive club add a special meaning to the visit of a circuit put up by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, San Miguel Beer and WG&A Super Ferry.

Five of the previous six leg winners who are in the field should not expect Miñoza to be a gracious host.

Pressure is building up on Miñoza, now 42, to recover his winning touch (his last victory anywhere was in the Fujisankei Classic in May, 2001) and the young guns of a minor league have already shown him it won't be that easy.

Still working on the flaws of his game with his swing doctor Roger Retuerto, Miñoza placed 15th in Davao where he broke par just once in three days. The player who was once among the world's top 40 should be better prepared for the next week's leg in Del Monte which he he calls home but a previous commitment in Manila may force him to skip it.

With the steady stream of different winners of the tour organized by the Federation of Golf Clubs Philippines, Inc., expectations are high that the trend will continue especially since most players really are not familiar with the Pueblo course.

Pueblo is a beauty at mountain top, its flora and fauna blending with the friendly character of a par-72 course that stretches to as long as 5,165 yards.

Mizuno pro Mars Pucay, who won the Rancho Palos Verdes stop last week after a double-bogey blunder on the last hole by Cassius Casas, believes that the course offers challenges that can make for a finish as exciting as the one in Davao.

Els: 55-foot birdie to beat Baddeley

ELS

HONOLULU— In a thrilling battle that ended with an unlikely birdie, South Africa's Ernie Els outlasted 21-year-old Australian Aaron Baddeley in a playoff Sunday to win the Sony Open.

Els became the first player in 14 years to win the first two PGA Tour events of the season, but unlike last week at Kapalua, the Big Easy had to work hard for this one.

"I was just trying to stay alive," Els said. "All of a sudden, I win the tournament."

Els appeared to be a beaten man when he missed the 318-meter (353-yard) 10th green to the left and chipped through the green, some 16.5 meters (55 feet) from the hole.

Instead, Els rammed home the putt — just like Tiger Woods did to him three years ago at Kapalua — and won on the second playoff hole when Baddeley's 6-meter (20-foot) birdie putt hung on the lip.

Els closed with a 3-under 67, while Baddeley had a 69 as both finished at 16-under 264.

"I thought the kid was going to go away, but he kept at me," Els said. "Unlucky for Aaron, but he's going to win a lot of titles."

For Baddeley, it was a crushing end to his debut as a PGA Tour member.

With steely nerves and a game that belies his 21 years, Baddeley holed a 3.6-meter (12-foot) birdie putt on the 18th hole to force a playoff, made another birdie from 1.6 meters (6 feet) to continue and was in much better shape than Els on No. 10, the second playoff hole.

He never dreamed Els would make it.

"It was a heck of a putt," Baddeley said. "I'm disappointed because I had a chance to win. But I'm happy because I made Ernie work for it, and I didn't have my A-game today."

It was a stunning conclusion, and a great sendoff for Els. *AP*

McGrady lifts Magic over Raptors

TORONTO—Tracy McGrady had 35 points, 11 rebounds and eight assists for Orlando against his former team, Toronto for a 101-93 victory Sunday night in the NBA.

McGrady, who played three seasons in Toronto before signing with Orlando as a free agent, was 14-for-31 from the field.

Jacque Vaughn added 15 points for the Magic.

Morris Peterson had 25 points for the injury-riddled Raptors, who have lost three consecutive games and 15 of their past 17. All-Star Vince Carter missed his 21st straight game with a strained right knee.

In Seattle, Rashard Lewis scored 19 points, made a turnaround jump shot in the final 43.1 seconds and hit two free throws with 10.3 seconds remaining to lift the Seattle SuperSonics to an 85-81 victory over the Dallas Mavericks on Sunday.

The Sonics have slumped this month, opening the new year with six losses before an overtime victory Friday against Memphis. But Seattle looked strong in handing the Mavericks their third straight loss.

Peja Drobnjak scored 19 points in a rare reserve role for the Sonics, hitting 8-of-13 to break out of his three-game shooting slump. Kenny Anderson scored 13 points and made a key jumper from the left corner with 1:49 to play. *AP*

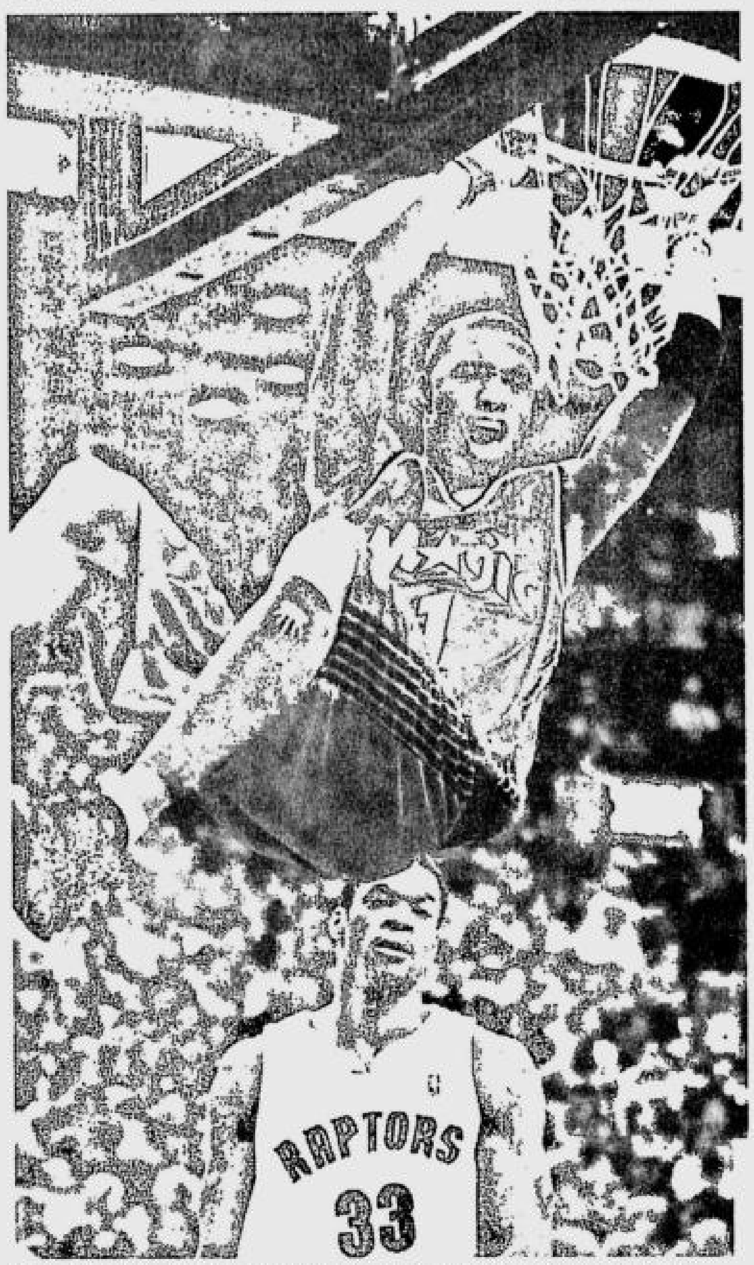
Lakers face Clippers

THE REIGNING NBA champion Los Angeles Lakers take on their young and athletic crosstown rivals, the Los Angeles Clippers at 11 a.m. today on Solar Sports. Replay will be at 10 p.m.

This will be the Lakers' first game since losing to the Houston Rockets in overtime, 104-108, last Saturday. In the much-awaited showdown between Shaquille O'Neal and Yao Ming, O'Neal finished with the better statistical line–31 points, 13 rebounds and four assists to Yao's 10 points, 10 rebounds and six blocks.

PBL FINAL

Dazz has deep bench—Baculi



MCGRADY (1) hangs from the rim after scoring against Toronto Raptors center Antonio Davis (33) in the second half of their NBA game in Toronto yesterday. Magic won, 101-93. REUTERS

By Dennis U. Eroa

THE LONGER the better for coach Junel Baculi as Dazz gets ready for the PBL Challenge Cup best-of-five championship series against Welcoat.

Game One is set on Thursday at the Quezon Convention Center in Lucena City.

"We have the edge if the series will reach five games," said Baculi, who will pit wares with his former starting pointguard and buddy Leo Austria.

Baculi said Dazz's deep bench will give the Sparklers the energy and flexibility to shine in a long series.

Austria shares Baculi's observation. "No doubt about it. Dazz's bench is deeper. Coach Junel enjoys the luxury of rotating 12 men," said Austria.

Austria also noted that the arrival of John Ferriols adds maturity to Dazz. "Dazz now has a leader in Ferriols," said Austria.

Dazz is hoping to end six years of frustration in the league. Incidentally, the last time it won a title was under Baculi who steered the Cecilio Pedro-franchise to the 1996 Reinforced title before transferring to Welcoat.

Welcoat has since won four titles under Baculi.

Dazz's lineup is a complete package composed of Eugene Tan, Christian Luanzon and Ryan Dy alternating in the point, while Cyrus Baguio, June Simon, Allan Salangsang and Nino Gelig man the wings.

BACULI

AUSTRIA

Aside from Ferriols, Baculi can use Joel Dualan, Alwyn Espiritu and Francis Mercado to rule the boards.

Baculi said the series is also about adjustments. Dazz likes to play the zone against Welcoat, which only have one legitimate shooter--Ariel Capus.

But Dazz isn't inclined to play man-to-man because Welcoat's starting unit of Romel Adducul, Eddie Laure, Ronald Tubid, Paul Artadi and Capus packs a knockout punch.

"Anything can happen during gametime," Baculi said.

Coke Go-for-Goal kicks off in Pasig

THE ALL-LUZON finals of the Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 football tournament unwraps today at the Philsports field in Pasig City with six teams, led by NCR titlist Ateneo de Manila University, vying for honors.

The other contenders are Laguna's Pedro Guevarra National High, Baguio's Pines City National High, Camarines Norte's Vinzons Pilot National High, Masbate National Comprehensive High and Rizal's Gen. Licerio Geronimo Memorial High.

The top two teams will join four other teams from Visayas and Mindanao in the national finals set for Feb. 9-13 in Dumaguete City.

The early national finalists are Cebu's Don Bosco Technology and Dumaguete's San Miguel Municipal High of Bacong, representing the Visayas, and Iligan's La Salle Academy and Ateneo de Davao, representing Mindanao.

The opening ceremony will start at 7:30 a.m. with Philippine Football Federation president Rene Z. Adad as guest of honor.

Dumaguete's Negros Oriental National High won last year's national crown.

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Delariarte to defend DHL crown

JEROME Delariarte will defend his crown in the DHL-NGAP Open set for Jan. 28-31 at Canlubang North.

"The DHL Open is like a major in amateur golf and of course everybody wants to win it," said Delariarte, the reigning national amateur champion. "I'm sure all the best amateur golfers in the country will be there to challenge me."

Delariarte beat his friend, Angelo Que, for the title last year at Eagle Ridge, their match going down to the last hole.

"We expect a full complement of the country's top amateurs in the field and nothing less than a big battle for top honors," said DHL chair Rod Feliciano, also the president of the organizing National Golf Association of the Philippines.

The 24-year old Delariarte is expected to spearhead the Southwoods contingent in the event presented by DHL Worldwide Express and WWW Express, which has cut a reputation as one of the most prestigious amateur golf events in the land.

Que has turned pro and is now campaigning in the First Gentleman's Circuit in Mindanao.

Delariarte said he was not rushing things up.

"My priority right now is to make a big impact on the amateur scene beginning hopefully with the DHL Open," said Delariarte.

Delariarte's chief rival for the crown is Juvic Pagunsan, Canlubang's top gun.

After the DHL-NGAP Open, Delariarte is expected to lead Southwood's campaign in the PAL Interclub next month in Davao City.

Aside from Delariarte and Pagunsan, other major contenders in the DHL Open in the absence of Que and last year's champion Marlon Dizon are Del Monte ace Paul Miñoza, former national caddies winner Jay Bayron and Bacolod's JR Tanpinco.

Cangolf chair Luigi Yulo is in the final stages of making Canlubang North in tip-top shape.

FELICIANO

Albanza wins De Venecia golf

FORMER airline pilot Col. Art Albanza emerged low gross champion in the recently concluded Speaker Jose de Venecia Cup Golf Tournament sponsored by the Center for the Promotion of Peace and Development of Mindanao held at the Villamor Golf Course.

Other winners were Rhett Ermita, low net champion; Malaysian Trade Commissioner Raijan Shariff, Class A champion; Rep. Banasing Macarambon, Class A runner-up; Canadian Ambassador Robert Collete, Class B champion; Dr. Basilio de los Reyes, Class B runner-up; Loy Paloso, Class C champion, followed by Class C runner-up Deedee Siytangco; Class D champion Rep. Oyi M. Umali, and Class D runner-up Canada's International Utility Structures representative Sonny Siytangco.

Speaker de Venecia formally opened the tournament at the traditional ceremonial tee-off, with Korean Ambassador Sang-ha Son, Ambassador Collette, Rep. Paras, Banasing Macarambon, Oyie Umali and Tony Roman, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Nestor Santillan and CPPDM Director General Saeed A. Daof.

North Lanao Rep. Macarambon expressed his thanks and appreciation to the CPPD and encouraged it to sponsor more national conferences, symposiums and workshops that would help advance the efforts for a lasting peace and development in Mindanao.

Mandaluyong Ucap derby on today

SEVERAL Ucap stalwarts are up against upcoming Metro Manila cockers in today's "BRB 4-Cock Derby" at the Mandaluyong Coliseum featuring more than 50 fights.

Among the participants today are lawyer Ram Lopez, OPMI president Vic Yu, Tony Litonjua, Bobby Wong, Jake Macasaet, Pol Estrellado, Blandy Tolentino, Art Osmeña, Ding Tuazon, James Uy, lawyer Romero Yu, Ucap president Raymond Velayo, Boy de Roca, Justice Magdangal Elma, Biboy Enriquez, Sonny Lagon, Joseph Sy, Renato Shio, Louie Cua, Boy Enriquez and Val Adriano.

Sponsors are Sagupaan Mite Free, Sagupaan Hammer Dewormer, Complexor 3000 and Washout Shampoo from Lakpue Drug Inc.

Hosting the event are Ucap boys Ruding, Boy and Bonjing Catajan. Entry fee is P10,000 while minimum bet is P5,500.

Last week, sabong idol Patrick Antonio (Sagupaan Hammer) and Johan Capinpin (J-Cap Mad AT RBA) emerged as co-champions in the "3rd Ucap 7-Cock Derby" last week after posting six points each.

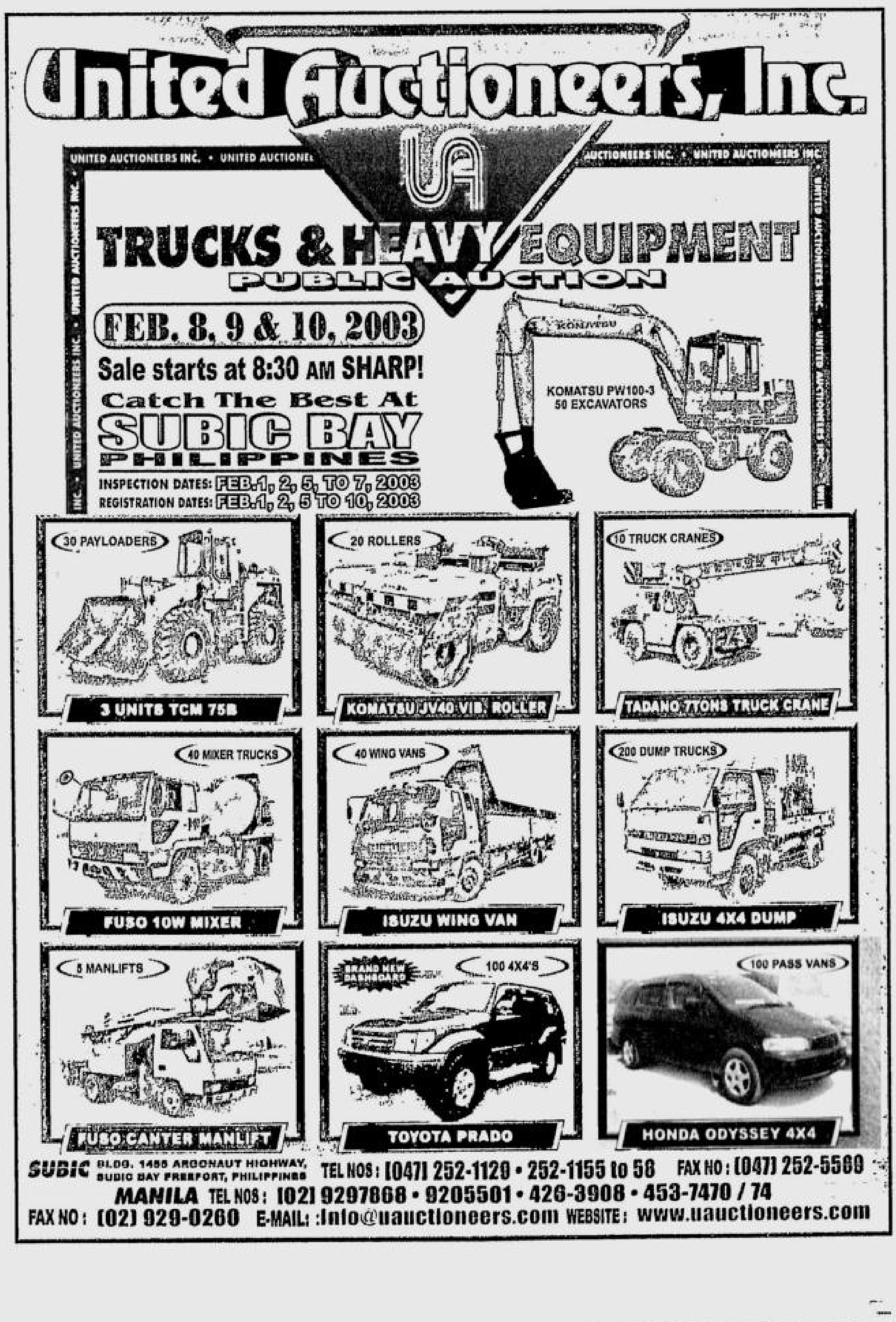
Roligon 5-Cocker draws 60 participants

THE LIST of confirmed entries to the forthcoming "13th Anniversary 5-Cock Derby" of Roligon Mega Cockpit builds up as the countdown to the much-awaited prize-rich event continues.

This early, more than 60 Metro Manila and provincial derbyists have made sure their participation and among them are Lawrence Tan, Joey Rebadavia, Brendo and Tito, Louie Tolentino, Col. Odelon Ramoneda, Art Malijan, Ronald Gonzaga, Vic Mariano, Alex Melgar, Yeye Carabanan, Ramon Ayson, Bert Matti, William Co, Bobby Doromal, ASF Group, Dong Lacson of Ilo-ilo and Butchoy Ang of Cagayan de Oro.

Set for Feb. 4 (2-cock elimination) and 6 (3-cock finals), the event is being hosted by Rolly Ligon and offers a guaranteed prize of P1 million. Entry fee is P8,800 and minimum bet is P4,400.

For other details, please contact 833-2275 and 833-1638.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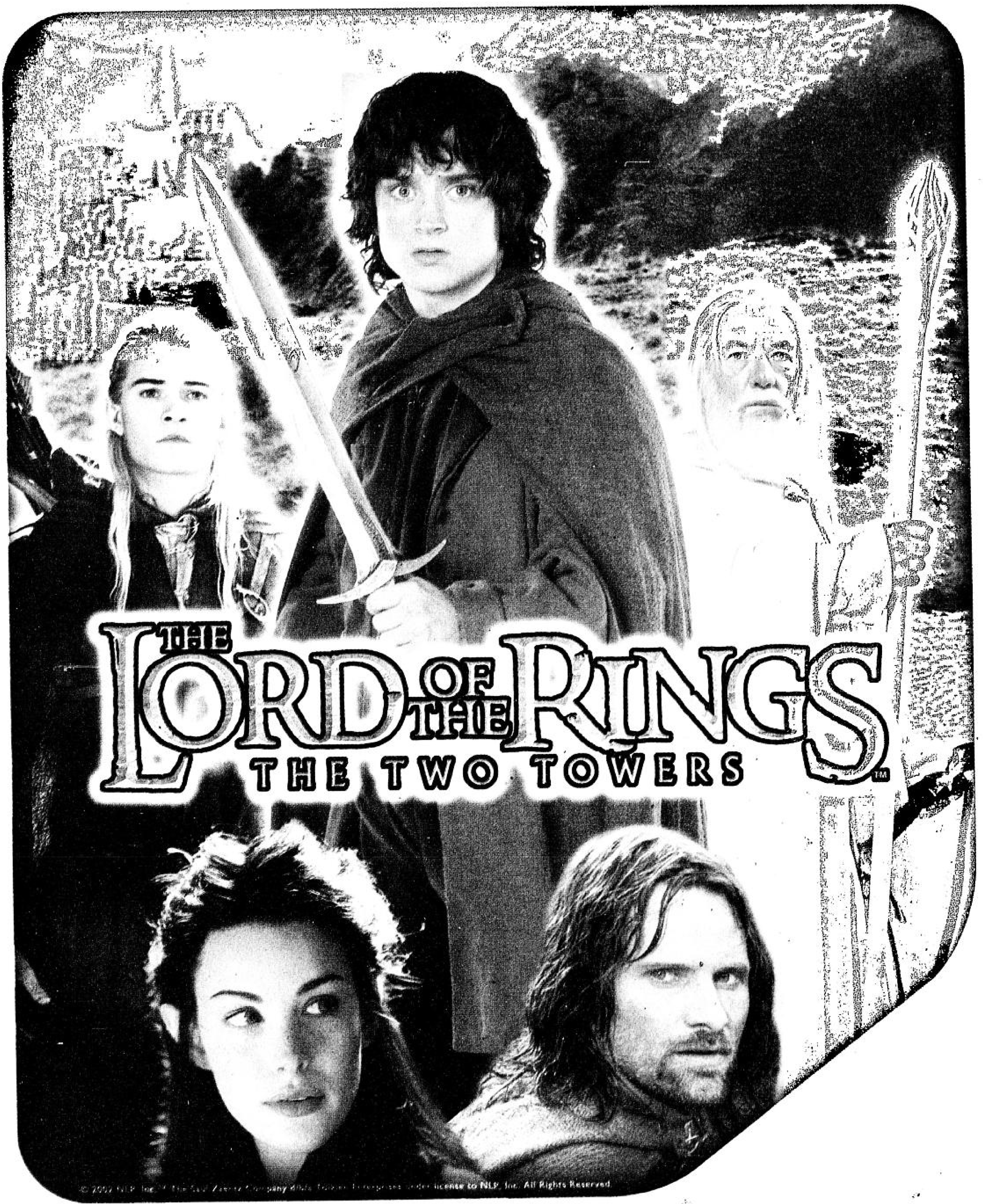
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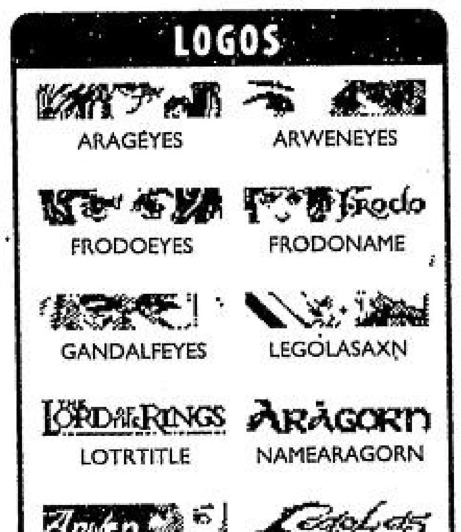
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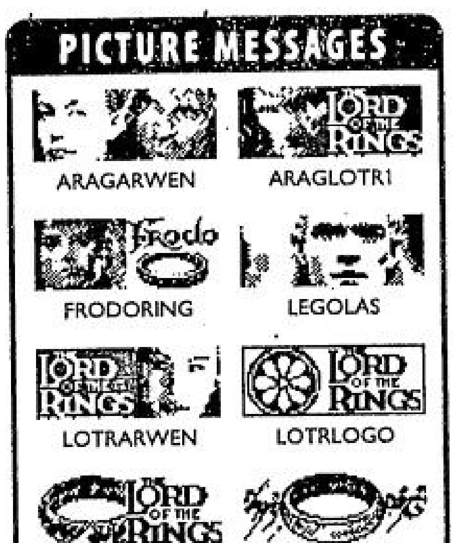
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1984 road rage killer finally turns self in

By Leila Salaverria

RETIRED Navy Capt. Eladio C. Tangan, 62, who was convicted of killing a 29-year-old optometrist during a traffic altercation in 1984, turned himself in to authorities yesterday.

Police had been looking for Tangan so he could serve out his 14-year sentence for the 1984 killing of Generoso Miranda III.

The Supreme Court sentenced Tangan to a minimum of six years and one day to a maximum of 14 years, eight months and one day, overturning a lower court's decision to sentence him to a maximum of two years and four months in jail.

The lower court's decision was earlier upheld by the Court of Appeals before being overturned by the Supreme Court.

Even up to the last, Tangan's lawyer was denouncing the Supreme Court's decision while Miranda's family breathed a sigh of relief after Tangan's surrender.

Mia, Miranda's 18-year-old daughter who was only three months old when her father was killed, said she has forgiven the Navy Captain long ago, although she believes that Tangan should serve out his sentence.

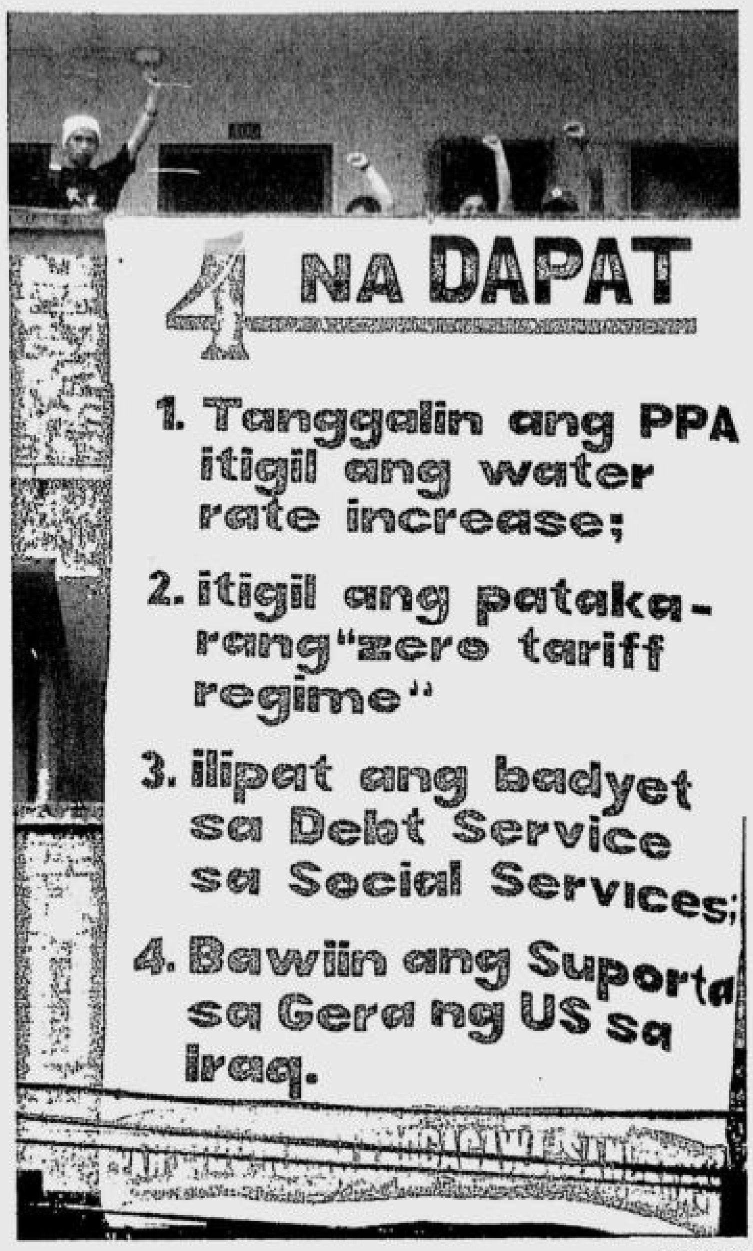
"We just want him to face the consequences. If not, people will think that crime does pay," she said, adding that Ateneo law Graduate Jose Ramon Llamas' recent killing during a traffic altercation made her all the more determined to see her father's case through.

Miranda's brother Buenaventura, upon knowing of Tangan's surrender, expressed his gratitude to the Supreme Court for being "able to see the facts."

But the very same Supreme Court decision is being complained about by Tangan's lawyer Carnell Valdez.

In a letter to the INQUIRER, Valdez denounced his client's depiction as a murderer and cited a Regional Trial Court's decision showing that Tangan was provoked into

1984/ A18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ERIK ARAZAS

MEMBERS of Sanlakas unfurl a banner containing their demands during a rally at Mendiola, Manila (more pictures on page 19).

Baby Lacson, Baby Campos create stir at Makati Med

By Leila Salaverria

BABY Lacson. Baby Campos.

No, they're not the children of Senator Panfilo "Ping" Lacson and Narcotics agent John Campos.

They were both born on Sunday at the Makati Medical Center and attracted the attention of observers, who noted the curious coincidence.

The babies' bassinets were even adjacent to each other yesterday afternoon.

The two cute baby boys attracted much attention at the hospital's viewing room yesterday, but it was not only their attractive features that were the focus of attention, but their surnames posted on their bassinets as well.

Baby boy Campos was born at 10:53 a.m. to parents Darlene and Voltaire. He weighed 5.12 pounds and is the Campos' fourth child.

Baby boy Lacson weighed 7.9 pounds and was born at 1:34 a.m. to Carmen and Jovy. He is the couple's third child.

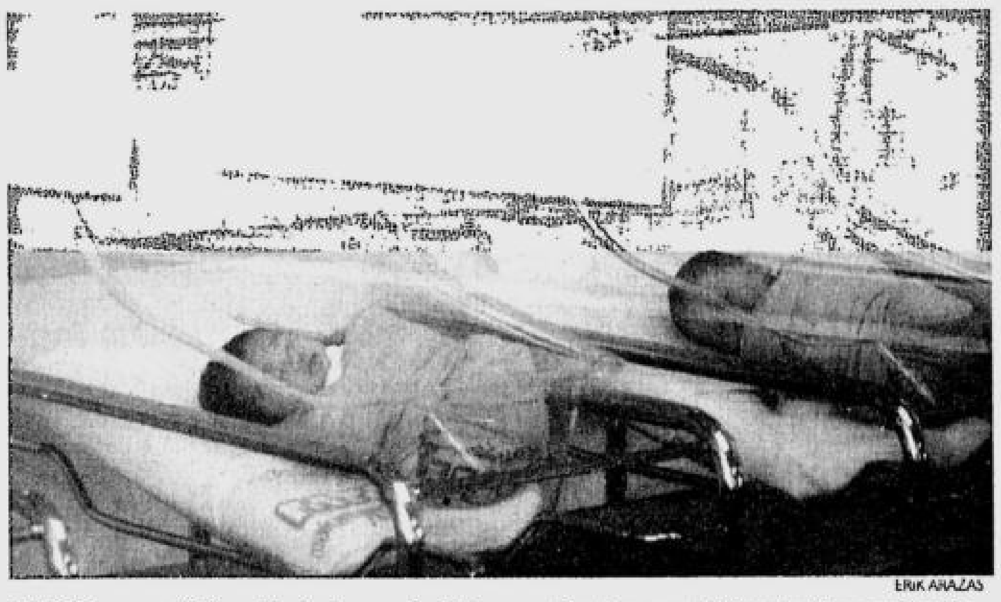
According to Carmen, her husband is a distant relative of the Senator, although she is not sure how.

For his part, Voltaire said his family is not related to the controversial Narcotics agent, although he himself noticed the coincidence about a Campos and a Lacson being in the same room.

Narcotics agent Campos, who was recently gunned down in an early morning ambush, was a trusted aide of Senator Lacson.

After Campos' death, Lacson and the Narcotic agent's former lover Mary "Rosebud" Ong traded accusations. Ong accused Lacson of masterminding Campos' death, while Lacson turned on Ong.

Campos, Lacson and Ong figured in a controversial Senate hearing after Ong tagged Lacson and Campos as principal figures in kidnapping and drug trafficking activities.



ERIK ARAZAS

BABY Campos (left) and baby Lacson, both born on Sunday, are oblivious to the cosmic joke they are both thrust into so early on in their lives. The babies, no relation to the late lawman and the controversial senator, lie in bassinets set side by side at the Makati Medical Center.

10-wheeler rams into stalled FX on expressway; 4 killed

By Christian V. Esguerra

FOUR people were killed while four others were injured when a 10-wheeler truck rammed into a stalled vehicle in Alabang, Muntinlupa before midnight Sunday.

Violy Torreloza and Christopher Fajardo were killed instantly while Ermita Quinonez, 25, and Anthony Tagumpay, 30, died later at the Ospital ng Muntinlupa.

Their companions, Rodrigo Quinonez, 52, and his daughter Glenefer, 24, and Ma. Victoria Lawig and her son Erich, were confined at the same hospital due to severe and head and body injuries.

The victims were on their way home to Cabuyao in Laguna when their Toyota Tamaraw FX (TRW-957) had engine trouble along the at-grade level of the South Luzon Tollway, said Allan Dempas of the Philippine National Construction Corp.

Having failed to jumpstart the engine twice, they decided to move the vehicle and park it near the Alabang exit of the tollway, according to the official PNCC report.

But just as they were pushing the van toward the tollgate, a 10-wheeler driven by Artemio Acosta slammed into the Tamaraw's rear, shoving the vehicle for about 50 meters at around 11:35 p.m., Dempas said.

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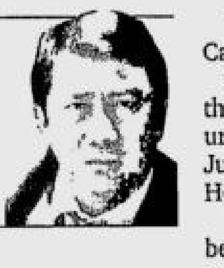
Kakampi ng Naaapi! Magbabalik na!

Arrest order vs Lacson can't be enforced



ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

I MAY have differences with Sen. Panfilo Lacson, but I think the US Superior Court has no business summoning any Filipino citizen, much more a senator of this republic, to appear before it to answer charges in a case that supposedly took place in this country.

Superior Court Judge Harry R. Sheppard of California threatened to have Lacson arrested or cited for contempt if he did not appear in court at the County of Alameda in Oakland, California.

Bulls**t! Sheppard's court can issue a thousand orders of arrest but they cannot be enforced in this country.

* * *

In the first place, the crime—if indeed Lacson committed a crime—did not take place in the United States but in the Philippines.

Secondly, Lacson is not a US citizen.

Thirdly, the Philippines is no longer a US territory. It is an independent republic.

* * *

The case against Lacson stems from his withholding payment of $3 million to a businesswoman based in California over a failed handcuffs deal with the Philippine National Police. Lacson was then the PNP chief.

Only Philippine courts have jurisdiction over the case.

The Americans should stop treating the Philippines like their colony.

* * *

El Shaddai leader Mike Velarde has announced he would no longer allow politicians to attend his group's prayer meetings because they only use these occasions to campaign.

It's a good thing Velarde has become enlightened! He no longer wants his group to be used by politicians.

But who is using whom, anyway? Velarde was using the politicians who gave huge monetary contributions whenever they presented themselves before the El Shaddai crowd.

* * *

Velarde wants politicians to become card-carrying members of El Shaddai before he allows them on the stage in his group's prayer rallies.

El Shaddai elders believe politicians who are privileged to go on stage during their prayer meetings have a big chance of winning.

How presumptuous of them! Catholics, who compose the bulk of El Shaddai membership, don't vote as a bloc.

* * *

There's no such thing as a Catholic vote.

Jaime Cardinal Sin was given this painful reminder when he urged the faithful not to vote for Juan Flavier and Gregorio Honasan.

Both became senators, perhaps because of the free advertisement provided by the good cardinal.

* * *

Many don't know this, but a GSIS or SSS member who meets an accident or gets sick while performing his job is entitled to benefits from the Employees Compensation Commission (ECC).

When the employee or his relatives claim benefits from the SSS or GSIS as a result of work-related injury or death, he or his relatives should also file claims with the ECC.

The benefits from the ECC are not automatic upon filing claims from the SSS or the GSIS. The employee or his relatives will still have to file claims with the ECC.

* * *

The employee or his relatives who fail to file claims with the ECC forfeit the benefits from the ECC.

The law on the ECC should be amended in such a way that when one files for benefit claims with the SSS or GSIS, he automatically files the same claims with the ECC.

Many people expressed surprise when I discussed this issue over my radio program at "Isumbong mo kay Tulfo" at dwIZ. They said they didn't know about this set-up.

* * *

Let's hope mall security guard Ma. Fe Sotelo, who returned a bag containing P500,000 to its owner, will be taken in as a member of the Philippine National Police, as PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. has promised.

Sotelo wanted to become a cop but she couldn't pass the minimum height requirement of five feet.

Ebdane said that he would waive the height requirement for Sotelo.

* * *

Sotelo's entry into the PNP, Ebdane said, will "boost our campaign for an honest, effective and competent police force.

Let's hope that Sotelo, an Ilongga, doesn't get infected with rampant dishonesty within the PNP.

Good luck, Inday!

* * *

Actually, there are more honest and competent cops than there are dishonest and inept ones.

But the inept and corrupt cops give the PNP a bad name even if there are only a few of them.

Remember what we've been told in school about one rotten apple infecting the other good apples?

Road killer...

From page A17

shooting Miranda after the victim and his uncle ganged up on the Navy Captain.

"It was while the accused and the two Mirandas were grappling for the possession of gun that it went off, hitting Generoso Miranda in the stomach," Valdez cited the decision as saying.

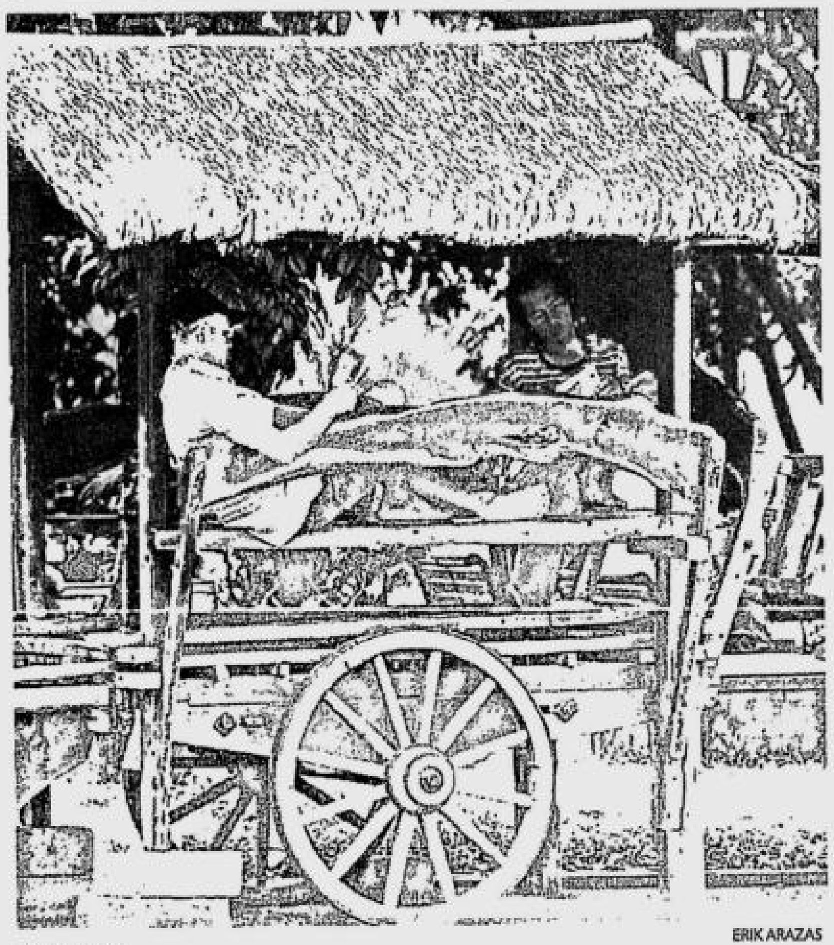
The lawyer added that as per the lower court's findings, it was Miranda who provoked Tangan into a fight as showed by the fact that Miranda got down from his car first and approached Tangan after the former failed to overtake the Navy Captain.

Valdez also cited records which showed that it was Miranda who got down from his car first and shouted expletives at Tangan when the former failed to overtake the latter's car.

Thus, the lower court ruled that Tangan was guilty of homicide with incomplete self-defense.

The Court of Appeals upheld these findings, said the lawyer, but lamented that the Supreme Court "overturned the findings" and even increased Tangan's sentence.

Valdez also took offense that Miranda's death was referred to as a murder, saying that court decisions point to the contrary.



ERIK ARAZAS

RUSTIC
Two men in a makeshift hut in Plaza Lawton, Manila, get to kill time the old-fashioned way—something most men their age can only dream of doing.

Llamas slay suspect fails to give up; cops close in

By Christian Esguerra and Philip Tubeza

INVESTIGATORS are finally moving in to arrest the alleged killer of Ateneo law graduate Jose Ramon Llamas after the suspect reportedly failed to keep his promise last week to the National Bureau of Investigation that he would turn himself.

Senior Supt. Oscar Catalan, Pasay City police chief, yesterday said suspect Cola M. Ditato probably meant to delay the investigation—indicating his possible guilt—when he failed to keep his promise after sending out surrender feelers.

"We're not buying them (surrender feelers) anymore," Catalan told the INQUIRER. "It's been nearly a week, but he has yet to show up. We have to move now and locate him immediately."

Catalan admitted that police and the NBI suspended operations to arrest Ditato after the missing trader sent word last week that he would soon surface and was willing to be investigated.

The police official believed that the surrender feelers only allowed the suspect to further elude arrest.

But once Ditato is found, Catalan noted that he and his men could not technically arrest him for lack of legal basis. He said the trader would only be invited for questioning and presented to witnesses.

Besides Ditato, police are also looking for two more men—a Muslim trader and another who purportedly resemble Llamas' killer.

An NBI investigator yesterday revealed that they have another witness who noticed the "similarities" between the gunman and primary suspect Ditato.

But this has not stopped the NBI from looking into other possible suspects in the killing, including one who might be a policeman, said the NBI investigator who requested anonymity.

The source said the second witness saw the 1998 picture of Ditato and noticed the "similarities" between the trader and the gunman.

Another witness earlier said that Ditato, of Dasmariñas, Cavite, bore a 60 to 70 percent resemblance to the gunman.

But the source said that the NBI is also pursuing other possible suspects in the case.

"The gunman looked like a policeman, acted like a policeman," the official quoted the witness as saying. "We are now comparing notes with the Pasay police. We have the same suspects."

The NBI also have a new sketch of the gunman based from the description given by the new witness.

"He saw the gunman up close, unlike others who saw the assailant with a helmet on," the source said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, January 21, 2003
2nd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Heb 6:10-20
Gospel: Mk 2:23-28

One sabbath Jesus was walking through grainfields. As his disciples walked along with him, they began to pick the heads of grain and crush them in their hands. Then the Pharisees said to Jesus, "Look! they are doing what is forbidden on the sabbath!"

And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did in his time of need, when he and his men were very hungry? He went into the house of God when Abiathar was High Priest and ate the bread of offering, which only the priests are allowed to eat, and he also gave some to the men who were with him." Then Jesus said to them, "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath. So the Son of Man is master even of the sabbath."

Commentary

It is part of the ambiguity of all religion that what is supposed to serve as a mediation, a contact point with the divine, can also at the same time, hinder and block access to God. What is supposed to reveal God's goodness and love obscures and conceals it instead. Such had the Sabbath Law become to the Pharisees in today's gospel. Instead of mediating contact with the God of Exodus who felt compassion for the plight of the slaves, their narrow interpretation of the Sabbath prohibition against work hindered the experience of this God who fed the hungry with manna. We must constantly discern whether the laws, the policies, the rituals of our religion succeed in bridging the distance between God and humans. They might actually only serve to worsen the sense of God's remoteness from our real lives and concerns.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

POLITICAL LAW (CONSTITUTIONAL LAW)—**Acts of Congress in the exercise of its legislative powers are not subject to judicial restraint**—Under the separation of powers, the Court cannot restrain Congress from passing any law, or from setting into motion the legislative mill according to its internal rules. Thus, the following acts of Congress in the exercise of its legislative powers are not subject to judicial restraint: the filing of bills by members of Congress, the approval of bills by each chamber of Congress, the reconciliation by the Bicameral Committee of approved bills and the eventual approval into law of the reconciled bills by each chamber of Congress. Absent a clear violation of specific constitutional limitations or of constitutional rights of private parties, the Court cannot exercise its power of judicial review over the internal processes or procedures of Congress. The Court has also no power to dictate to Congress the object or subject of bills that Congress should enact into law. The judicial power to review the constitutionality of laws does not include the power to prescribe to Congress what laws to enact. The Court has no power to compel Congress by mandamus to enact a law allowing petitioners, regardless of their age, to vote and be voted for in the July 15, 2002 Sangguniang Kabataan elections. To do so would destroy the delicate system of checks and balances finely crafted by the Constitution for the three co-equal, coordinate and independent branches of government. [Citations omitted.] [En Banc, Justice Carpio, Montesclaros v. Commission on Elections, G. R. No. 152295, July 9, 2002]

DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

METROBRIEFS

Stabbed in Novaliches

JAPANESE-FILIPINO student Tadayuki Oda was stabbed dead by a group of minors in Quezon City on Friday night. According to investigator Leo Nino Pasco of the Central Police District, seven minors, aged 14 to 18, chanced on the well-dressed victim on board a passenger jeepney, and "did not like the way (Oda) looked." Police said the minors, suspected members of a street gang, then attacked Oda at around 8:30 p.m. on Gen. Luis Street, Novaliches Proper, Quezon City, stabbing him several times. Oda, 20, of Bagong Silang, Quezon City, died at the Novaliches General Hospital. Police managed to arrest the suspects, all residents of Novaliches.

Alcuin Papa

Conned in Caloocan

TWO LAWMEN fell prey to an Indian con man, who duped them out of their cash right inside the police headquarters in Caloocan City, police reported on Saturday. According to victims PO2s Renato de Leon and Edgar Manapat, Sukhwinder Singh, 29, went to the station last week and sweet-talked the police officers into buying Nokia 8250 and 8210 cell phones. The two policemen were to trade in their old phones—a Nokia 3210 and 3310—and add some cash to acquire the new units. All seemed well until the clueless policemen discovered they were given defective cell phones. Disgusted and somewhat embarrassed because they were fooled on their own turf, the policemen filed estafa charges against Singh. The Indian has since then disappeared. Authorities are now looking for Singh, who gave his address at 32-B Lakas ng Mahirap Street, Gen. San Miguel, Caloocan

Tina Santos

Robbed in Malinta

TRICYCLE driver Victor Ebree suffered a double whammy in Valenzuela City on Saturday. A man who took on the driver's services not only refused to pay his fare, he also stole Ebree's tricycle. Ebree, of Bukid Street, Barangay Malinta, Valenzuela, could only scratch his head when he reported the incident to the police. Ebree said at around 9 a.m., he demanded his fare from the suspect after the driver took him to Karuhatan and Malinta. But the suspect refused to pay his fare, identified himself as a policeman and ordered the dumbfounded Ebree to hand over his driver's license and registration. Ebree said he believed the suspect was a real cop. But when he came back to the scene after fetching the documents at home, Ebree found that the suspect and his tricycle were already gone.

Tina Santos

Killed in Tondo

PEDICAB driver Modesto Ferrer, 48, and his daughter-in-law, Alma Grace Castro, 25, were stabbed to death allegedly over a dispute involving drugs in Tondo, Manila Saturday morning. Ferrer and Castro had five stab wounds each on their chests when their bodies were discovered inside their residence on Rey Varona Street, Tondo. A neighbor of the victims told police that he saw suspect Joseph Dacillo leaving the victims' house shortly before the bodies were discovered. Other neighbors also told police that they heard a scuffle inside the house at around 4:30 a.m., homicide investigator PO3 Rodelio Lingcong said. A few minutes later, another neighbor said she saw Castro's son crying outside their house. When she and other neighbors tried to take the boy to his mother, they found the dead victims. Barangay authorities led by Chair Lorellario Lacson arrested Dacillo, 23, of Barrio Magsaysay, Tondo. During interrogation, Dacillo claimed he did go to the victims' house but only to sell Castro some pajamas. He also told police that Ferrer and Castro were drug-peddlers.

Jerome Aning

Slain in Quezon City

AN OLD grudge ended the life of a mason who was shot dead in Quezon City the Friday night. The victim was identified as Renato Moreno, 39, of Cabuyao, Sauyo, Quezon City. He was declared dead on arrival at the Fairview General Hospital, police said. Police said that at around 10 p.m., the victim was standing on Chestnut Street, Barangay Sauyo, when the suspect identified only as Boyet suddenly appeared, pulled out a handgun and shot the victim in the chest. The suspect fled as the victim lay dying on the ground. Police said an old grudge was the motive behind the shooting.

Alcuin Papa

Conservationists want to turn Arroceros into bird sanctuary

By Jerome Aning

FROM forest park to bird sanctuary.

Conservationist groups have asked the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to declare Arroceros Forest Park a bird sanctuary in a bid to prevent City Hall from constructing a building for teachers on the site.

Bird watcher Mike Lu said the park is the only bird site in Manila, adding that his group had spotted seven bird species, which have made the park their home.

Declaring the park a bird sanctuary would also require that the park be left undisturbed.

In another move by other environment and conservationist groups determined to block construction on the park, the National Historical Institute was asked to declare the Arroceros Forest Park historical and forbid any construction on the site.

Conservationist and historical researcher Tina Testa said her group has asked the NHI to declare the park historical since it is part of the Parian, which is the site of Manila's first Chinese community and trading center.

She said the Parian already existed in the area even before the Spaniards came.

Testa explained that Arroceros got its name from the portion of the Pasig's riverbank where grain merchants from provinces unloaded rice for distribution. Arroz is rice in Spanish, she said.

Last year, the NHI declared the nearby Mehan Gardens a national historical landmark because it was the site of the Parian and the city's first botanical garden.

The Winner Foundation, the park's developer, have asked the help of environment and conservationist groups to stop City Hall from building on Arroceros Park.

Last week, Atienza said that City Hall is determined to construct a teachers' building despite Winner's opposition.

Winner president Regina Roces-Paterno said the 15-year development plan for the park expires in 2013.

She said the 3,500 trees on the park would not be able to stand full public opening and the construction of a building at this time.

She said the development of the park is only in the second phase (2002-2007), which provides for the park's partial opening to the public and secondary planting to protect it from erosion.

Atienza's insistence to build on the park is based on his contention that it was bought for P65 million using the city's special education fund. He said it is just fair that the teachers benefit from it.

The rites of Edsa II

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo delivers her speech during the celebration of the second anniversary of Edsa II. EDWIN BACASMAS

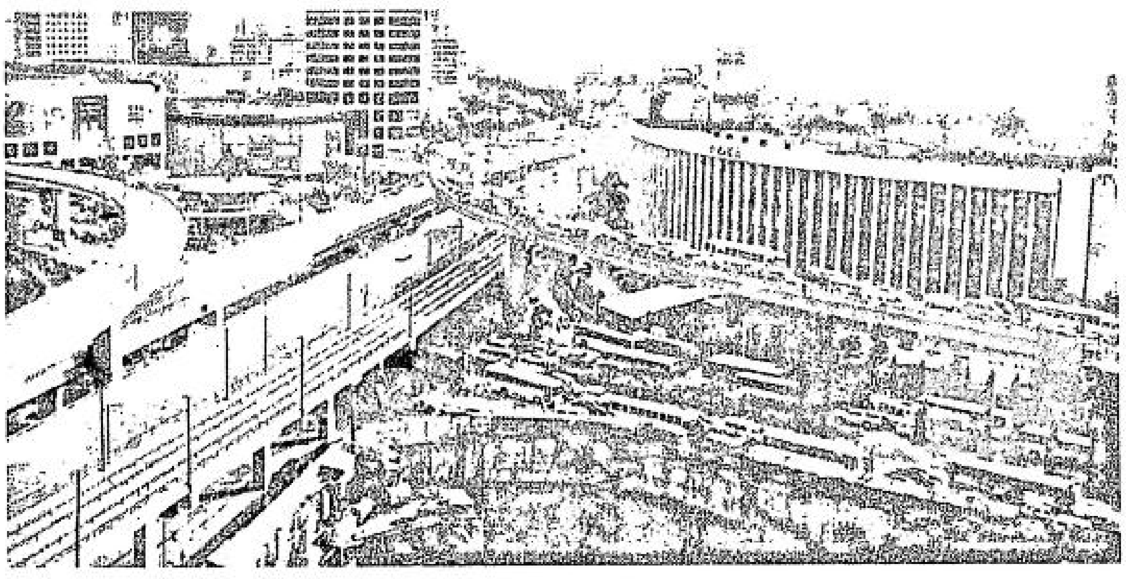
ANTI-RIOT police block ralliers from Bayan on their way to the Edsa Shrine.

DENNIS SABANGAN

Mamamayan, Magkaisa!
ITULOY
BAYAN

PROTESTERS from Bayan fail to reach the shrine and clash instead with anti-riot police.

DENNIS SABANGAN



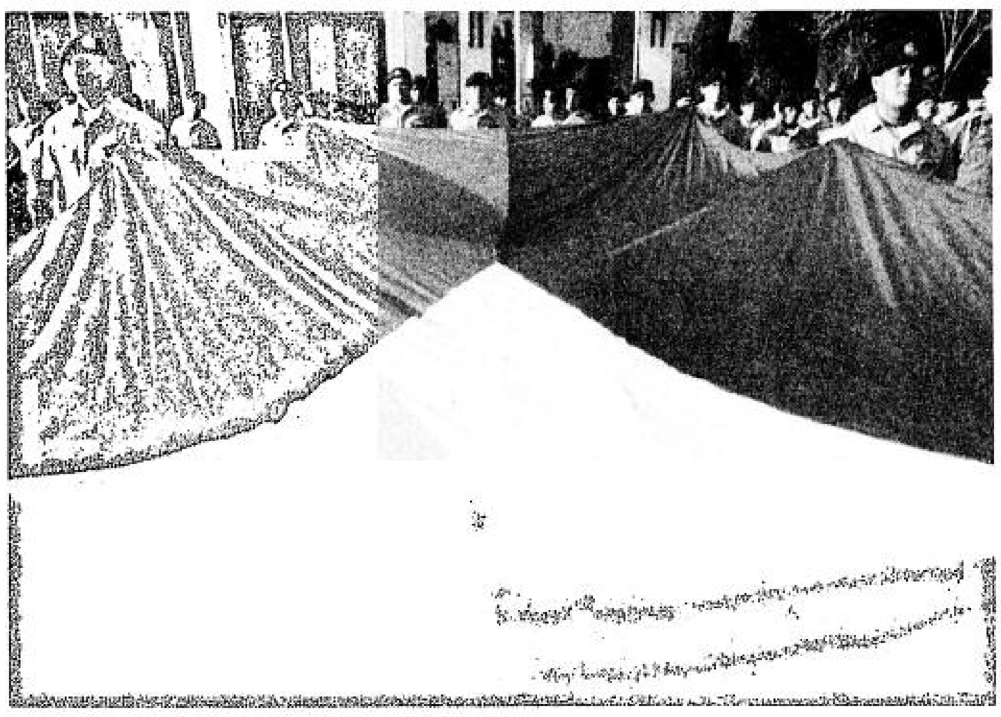
TRAFFIC on Edsa is snarled after police block a number of roads leading to the shrine, preventing protest groups without a permits from marching to the shrine.

VAL HANDUMON

KEY players of Edsa II take center stage at the Edsa Shrine .
Here are pictures of the event, marred by clashes between anti-riot police and militant groups.

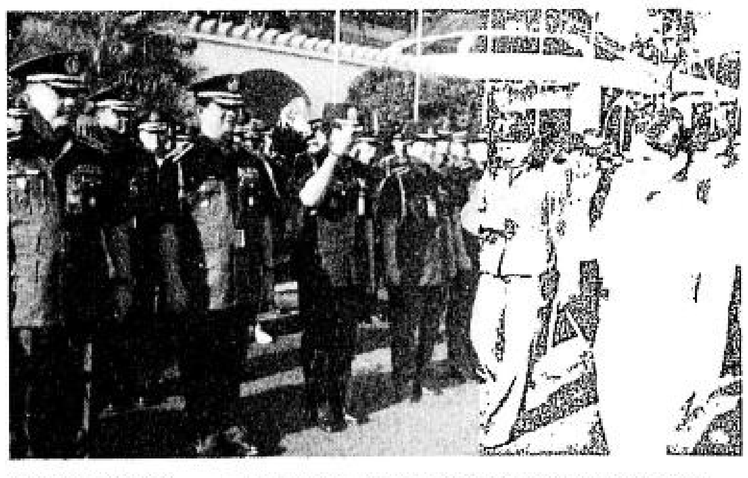
FIRST Couple attend the flag-raising ceremony at the Palace grounds.

EDWIN BACASMAS



THE Philippine flag is unfurled for the flag-raising ceremony at the Palace grounds

EDWIN BACASMAS



PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and the First Gentleman roam the grounds of Malacañang greeting and thanking Palace employees and officers of the Presidential Security Group after the flag ceremony.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Retired Court of Appeals Justice dies

RETIRED Court of Appeals Justice Profiro Sison died yesterday morning at the Makati Medical Center after a short illness. At the time of his death, Sison was dean of the Manila Law College and was chair of the Philippine Council of Law Deans and chair of the Philippine retired Justice of the Court of Appeals of the Philippines Association.

Sison was married to Nancy Q. Sison, herself a lawyer, with whom he had 7 children, 28 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

His remains lie in state at the Mount Carmel Church in Broadway, Quezon City. Interment will be this weekend in Lingayen Pangasinan.

2 tourists drugged, robbed in Manila

By Philip Tubeza

TWO tourists were robbed over the weekend by alleged members of the Ativan gang, so called because they drug their victims with Ativan then rob them.

The thefts happened in a span of only six hours on Sunday, with one of the tourists hit during the festivities of the Feast of the Sto. Niño in Tondo, Manila, police said.

American Bill Bucy, 53, of 635 Golden Bay Hotel Fishing Village Restaurant at the corner of Padre Faura Street and Roxas Boulevard, and Finnish scientist Gindonis V. Veera, 30, currently billeted at Bayview Hotel on Roxas Boulevard, both complained that they were drugged and robbed, said investigators at the Western Police District-General Assignment Section.

Bucy told police that he lost P40,000, $27, a diamond ring worth $1,000, and his credit card.

He identified the suspects only as Marlene, Liza, and three men, aged about 25.

Bucy said the suspects befriended him near his hotel at about 11 a.m. on Sunday.

He said he fell for their smooth talk and friendliness. But after accepting a drink from them, he fell unconscious, Bucy said.

Veera told police a woman who identified herself as Liza was one of six persons who drugged and robbed him. He said the other suspects identified themselves as Vivian and Aida. The three women were accompanied by three unidentified men, Veera said.

Veera said the suspects took from him P4,000, $40, a mobile phone and his sunglasses.

He told investigators that the suspects befriended him at about 5 p.m. Sunday along Juan Luna Street in Tondo, Manila.

Veera said the suspects invited him to join them and offered him a drink. He said he fell unconscious after drinking and found he was robbed when he woke up.

Wanted drug dealer falls

By Nelson Flores

MANDALUYONG police arrested one of the city's most wanted drug dealers during an intensified anti-crime operation over the weekend.

Jeffrey Datuon, 27, said to be the city's 16th most wanted drug dealer, was among the 12 persons arrested by police for various offenses.

Police also arrested Mohammad Famil Ensufian, 57, a Jordanian; Carlos Santos, 24; Aristotle Espiritu, 27; Benjamin Laurente, 40; James Ben Jerusalem, Aurea Aquino, Eddie Tabunag, Roger Reyes, Hilario Gamali, Rogelio Alivar and Jaypol Seria.

Their arrest came after Mandaluyong City Mayor Benjamin Abalos Jr. ordered police to intensify its anti-crime operations to make the city an investor-friendly community.

Datuon was arrested based on an arrest warrant issued by Mandaluyong City Regional Trial Court Branch 210 Judge Maria Cancino-Erum in connection with a pending drug case, police said. The other suspects were arrested for their alleged involvement in drugs, illegal gambling, estafa, perjury and attempted homicide, police said.

Houseboy accused of raping 9-year-old girl

RAPE charges were filed yesterday against houseboy Jojo Belo after the 9-year-old daughter of his employer identified him as the man who had sexually attacked her inside her house in Pasig City in November last year.

Police said Belo was charged before the Pasig City prosecutor's office two days after he was arrested in an eatery in Pasig City.

The victim told investigators that Belo began raping her in November.

The girl's mother filed the complaint against Belo last Saturday.

Belo, who is now detained at the Pasig City jail, denied raping the girl. *Nelson Flores*

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People, Events & Products
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FQPI celebrates one year at the Ultra

HISTORY was made as First Quadrant Philippines Inc. (FQPI) celebrated its first founding anniversary at the PhilSports Arena (formerly Ultra) last Jan. 8. The arena, which was usually filled with screaming basketball fans, was packed with more than 10,000 partying business associates. The event was the first of its kind in the history of Ultra, a known venue for numerous sports affairs.

Dubbed as the "Gatherign of Champions", the celebration was an accolade itself as more than fifty business associates were recognized for their great contributions to the company's overwhelming progress and success in a span of just one year. To date, there are already more than 80,000 business associates under the company's wings – a feat no other multi-level marketing company in the Philippines has achieved. FQPI is home to several shoe-manufacturing companies, making the company one of the country's top distributor and promoters of locally-made shoes.

Company president Doyee T. Tumpalan conveyed her gratitude to the business associates, whom she proudly calls, the "champions". In his keynote speech, Housing Secretary Mike Defensor emphasized the company's mission of uplifting the poor condition of the local shoe industry. He said the fulfillment of this task is an aid to foster the country's economy. This, he confirmed with Marikina Mayor Marides Carlos-Fernando, who also graced the occasion. In his speech, FQPI chair Socrates Tumpalan recounted the company's feats within one year.

Movie and TV actor Mr Edu Manzano hosted the event. Performances from crowd-drawing artists such as the Manoeuvres, "Asia's Nightingale" Ms Lani Misalucha, and Side A highlighted the celebration.

The affair ended with a raffle draw. Two winners for the trip-to-two to Hong Kong were announced, one went home P108,000.00 richer, and another was able to drive home the grand prize, a brand new Ford Lynx 1300.

The first anniversary celebration of the First Quadrant Philippines Inc. was a production of MMA Media Inc.

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BANGKOK TRIP

MASS-V GROUP'S PALAKBAY 2002 PROGRAM

Mass-V Group, the largest automotive battery importer and exclusive distributor of G-Force, Massiv, Magic Power, Mega Force and Delkor (MF) batteries successfully completed their 'Palakbay 2002' program for their dealers and distributors. To qualify for the program, a point-earning system was established wherein dealers and distributors were able to fulfill as early as the 2nd quarter of the year. The 'Palakbay' program was conceptualized last year and treated their clientele to all-expense paid trips to Hong Kong. Due to overwhelming response they received, Mass-V decided to continue the promo that once again gained nationwide support. 'Palakbay 2002' proved to be even bigger and better, with Mass-V's dealers, distributors and their families enjoying all-expense paid trips to Bangkok, Europe and USA. Photo shows dealers and distributors of the Mass-V Group enjoying an all-expense paid trip to Bangkok with the 'Palakbay 2002' program.

Excellence Awards

CDO-FOODSPHERE CITED AS TOP MEAT PROCESSOR

CDO-Foodsphere Inc. was cited by the National Consumers Affairs Foundation as the top processed manufacturer of 2002 at the 19th year-ender Excellence Awards held recently in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. The 27-year old food company was recognized for its sterling job of providing the Filipino consumers with nutritious products like hotdogs, hams and corned beef at affordable cost. Maritess T. Escarcha (second from right), CDO-Foodsphere's corporate planning manager, receives the award from the NCAF officials Jake Navea, Lolita Mirpuri and Amelia Mapago.

TWO HUNDRED THOUSAN
ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND
SEVENTY FIVE THOUSAND

2002 NOKIA SPEED TEXT CHAMP

After a nationwide search, Nokia has found the fastest texter of the country at the recently held 2002 Nokia Speed Text Challenge National Finals. Held at the Grand Atrium of the Shangri-La Plaza, the event was witnessed by an excited crowd cheering for their favorite speed texters. A celebrity and media fun round was also held to the delight of the audience. Celebrities Paula Peralejo, Christian Vazquez, Luis Manzano, Arnold Clavio, Ryan Agoncillo, Lyn Ching and Antoniette Taus were among the celebrities who showed off their speed texting skills. TV personality Suzi Entrata won the celebrity round while Pam Pastor of the Philippine Daily Inquirer was the fastest texter from the media round. Photo shows Nokia mobile phones country manager Parikshit Bhasin (2nd from left) awarding cash prizes to Nokia Speed Text National Champion Patrick Pastor (extreme left), 1st runner-up Maria Laurisa Miranda (2nd from right) and 2nd runner-up Laarni Mae Verdan (extreme right).

1st Bee a Millionaire raffle draw on Jan. 25

AS THE COUNTRY'S most favorite fast food chain celebrates its 25th anniversary this 2003, Jollibee is giving away millions in cash prizes, appliances and Jollibee products, through a grand and exciting promo Bee a Millionaire. This is Jollibee's way of sharing its success with everyone who made this Philippine milestone possible.

To qualify for the million pesos or Samsung appliances in the monthly raffle, simply fill up the raffle stub with your name, address, telephone numbers and signature and drop this off at the designated drop box at the Jollibee store.

The raffle stub or scratch card can be availed with every P125 single receipt food purchase. Customers may also win Jollibee products instantly when three of the four slots on the scratch card show the image of the instant Jollibee prize. These may be redeemed at the counter immediately.

Bee a Millionaire will be having its first raffle draw on Jan. 25 at Magandang Tanghali Bayan over ABS-CBN channel 2. You still have the chance to be a millionaire until March 20 as four more lucky customers can win one million pesos each. Two millionaires are drawn each month, from Jan. to March; one from Metro Manila and one from the provincial areas.

Visit Jollibee now. Who knows, you could Bee a Millionaire this 2003.

PIDSP 10th Annual Convention

THE PEDIATRIC Infectious Disease Society of the Philippines (PIDSP) is pleased to announce that it is holding its 10th Annual Convention this coming Feb. 5 to 6 at the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. This year's theme is "Achieving Optimal Outcome in the Management of Pediatric Infectious Diseases." Two foreign speakers have been invited, namely Dr. Michael S. Radetsky from Children's Hospital Central California and Prof. Thisyakorn from Chulalongkorn University Bangkok, Thailand. On-site registration fee P1,500. For further inquiries, you may contact PIDSP Secretariat Tel. Nos. 412-6998; 374-1855 or email at pidsp@uplink.com.ph or log on to www.pidsp.org.

CONTENDER SCHOOL

In the recently held Contender School in Lahug Cebu City, International Marketing Group (IMG) selected three winners in various categories. Winners were (from left) Cathy Borja, IMG CEO, in the middleweight or base category; Greg Sabile, IMG assistant marketing director, in the lightweight or personal category and the champion, Vangie Villanueva, IMG CEO in the heavyweight or superbase category.

American Express and Cebu Pacific's Holidays Trip Treat

AMERICAN Express and Cebu Pacific invites you to extend your holiday season and get a chance to treat yourself and win a free trip to Hong Kong, by simply using your American Express Cards to buy any Cebu Pacific ticket. A minimum purchase of P10,000.00 in a single receipt entitles American Express cardmembers to one raffle entry. This also qualifies you to chose from a number of premium items from American Express and Cebu Pacific that includes: leather travel organizer, Coleman lunch kit set, Coleman cooler set, Coleman flashlight set and leather utility set.

To join the raffle, the qualified American Express cardmember simply has to fill in the necessary information like name, address, telephone number, flight number and affix his/her signature at the back of the sales invoice and drop in drop boxes located in any Cebu Pacific organic ticket nationwide.

This special Holidays Trip Treat from American Express and Cebu Pacific is valid until Feb. 28. All raffle entries should be submitted on or before 12 a.m. of Feb. 28. So hurry and inquire at the nearest Cebu Pacific office and use your American Express Card and get the chance to visit Hong Kong absolutely free.

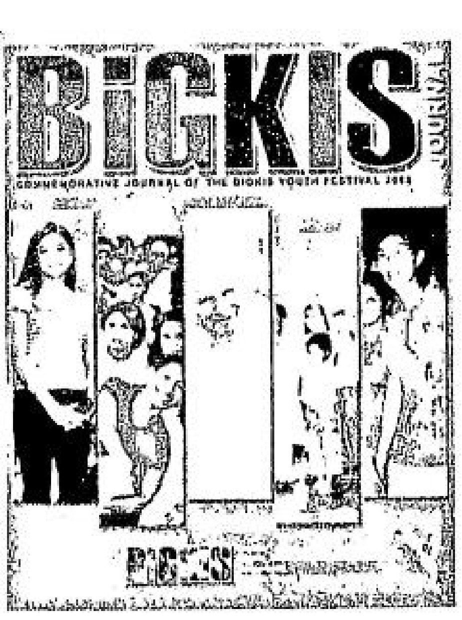
American Express, which opened its first Asian office in Manila in 1916, is a diversified travel, financial services and network company. Founded in 1850, it is a leader in charge and credit cards, travelers cheques, financial planning, investment products, insurance, and international banking. For more information on American Express, visit the worldwide web site at http://www.americanexpress.com.

QUIZ BEE GRAND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Shown in photo during the 23rd National Super Quiz Bee Grand Finals at the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) in Tagaytay City are (from left): Gemmalyn Zamora of Nutroplex Multivitamins; Laly Gutierrez of Tetra Pak Phils. Inc. (TPPI); Pettizou P. Tayag of the Quiz Bee Foundation (QBF), Rosanna Roa Ledesma of TPPI; collegiate general information and international affairs category national champions Prof. Franklin Robite and Erwin Taleon from the Western Visayas region; high school science and technology national champions Clarissa Avila and Bryan Alamani of NCR; elementary mathematics national champions Ernesto Pasco and Washington D. Co of Northern Mindanao; Mario Daquiz of Uni Writing Instruments; national champion coach for elementary makabayan Moneda Agabe; board of judges member Dr. Jason Madamba; makabayan national champion Lorelyn Joy O. Feliciano from Western Visayas; board of judges member Dr. Alberto Gamboa; Gay Palarca-Tayag, president of QBF; quizmaster Anthony Suntay; board of judges members Dr. Bernardino Li; chair Dr. Rene delos Santos and Dr. Ramon Cabag. The champions received a President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo trophy, Quiz Bee Gold Medallion of Excellence, 24 volumes of Colliers Encyclopedia, Hutchinsons Family Encyclopedia, personal computer, gift packages from Nutroplex Multivitamins, Tetra Pak and Uni Writing Instruments and e-learning courses from Netopia Internet Café. For more information log on to www.quizbee.com. For inquiries call Pettizou Tayag, Quiz Bee Foundation at 7120682.

Product FILES

Bigkis Journal



RELIVE the experience of the Bigkis Youth Festival 2002. This commemorative journal features a full-color account of the event. It also includes a primer on the forthcoming Fourth World Meeting of Families. Published by Belgosa Publishing Inc. in cooperation with the Ministry for Youth Affairs of the Archdiocese of Manila. For more details call Belgosa at 817-3870 or the Ministry for Affairs at 523-2814.

For sreening times, call 729-7777
Schedules are subject to change without prior notice.

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)	1 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS	1 RING (ORIGINAL JAPANESE VERSION)	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS	1 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
2 HALF PAST DEAD	2 THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS	3 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 11:30, 3:10, 6:50, 10:30	Onstage OGIE ALCASID: OA SA PUSO Feb. 7, 8, 13, 14 & 15	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
4 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS	4 HALF PAST DEAD		RING (ORIGINAL JAPANESE VERSION)	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
	5 HEAVEN		THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
	6 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS			
	7 RING (ORIGINAL JAPANESE VERSION)			

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Or log on to www.sureseats.com
*GSC: Guaranteed Seats Cinema

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METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
2 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS)	MANO PO
4 GOLD (DTS-ES)	HEAVEN
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	LORD OF THE RING
6 GOLD (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RING
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	HALF PAST DEAD
8	LASTIKMAN
9	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
10	THE RING

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	LASTIKMAN
2	BANGKERO
3 (DTS)	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6 (DTS)	RESERVE
Golden Pearl THX	RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA ①②③
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	BANGKERO

st★rmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	LASTIKMAN
3	BANGKERO
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	LORD OF THE RING
5	KERIDA

METROPOLIS st★r
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	KERIDA
2	LASTIKMAN
3	BANGKERO
4	LORD OF THE RING
5	THE RING
6	HALF PAST DEAD

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	AGIMAT

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to13

LORD OF THE RING

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	MANO PO
2	LASTIKMAN

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
tel 930.9515

1	RESERVE
2	KERIDA
3	BANGKERO

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	LASTIKMAN
3	BANGKERO
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RING
4	THE RING
5	MANO PO
6	BANGKERO
7 (DTS)	HEAVEN
8 (SDDS)	HALF PAST DEAD
9 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1	KERIDA
2	LASTIKMAN
3	BANGKERO
4 (SDDS)	HALF PAST DEAD
5	THE RING
6 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
7 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING
8	MANO PO
9	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1	BANGKERO
2 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS)	THE RING
4 (DOLBY)	HALF PAST DEAD
5	KERIDA

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	BANGKERO
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING
4	KERIDA
5 (SDDS)	THE RING

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	BANGKERO

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	BANGKERO

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	KERIDA
Lords	BANGKERO
Jennet	RESERVE

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	LORD OF THE RING
3	BANGKERO
4	LASTIKMAN

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
2	BANGKERO
3	THE RING
4	HALF PAST DEAD
5	KERIDA

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	DEKADA '70
2	

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	BANGKERO
2	HULA MO HULI KO

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT Araneta
MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400

1	LASTIKMAN
2	KERIDA
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HALF PAST DEAD
4 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
5 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
6	HEAVEN
7	MANO PO

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	LORD OF THE RINGS 2

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185, 534.2198

1	KERIDA
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	THE RING
2 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
4	HALF PAST DEAD

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	THE RING
2 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS)	HALF PAST DEAD
4	LASTIKMAN

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	LIKE MIKE
2	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
3 (DOLBY)	LASTIKMAN
4	RESERVE

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	LASTIMAN
2	KERIDA
3 (DOLBY)	LONG TIME DEAD
4 (DTS)	SWIM FAN

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	LONG TIME DEAD
2 (DTS)	LASTIKMAN
3	KERIDA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	RESERVE
2	BANGKERO
3 (DTS)	THE RING
4	HALF PAST DEAD

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3 (DTS)	LASTIKMAN
4	THE RING
5	MALDITA

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	THE RINGF
3	KERIDA

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	THE RING

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	BROTHER HOOD OF THE WOLF
2	LAPU LAPU
3 (DTS)	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
4 (DOLBY)	LASTIKMAN

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	RESERVE
2 (DTS)	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
2	LASTIKMAN
3	MASARAP NA PUGAD

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	LASTIKMAN
2	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
3	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
4	LONG TIME DEAD

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	LORD OF THE RING
2	LASTIKMAN
3 (DTS-ES)	THE RING
4	HALF PAST DEAD

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 322-3571

1	LASTIKMAN
2	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DOLBY)	HALF PAST DEAD
4 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

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FESTIVAL CINEMA
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72

BE THE FIRST TO WITNESS

THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS

NOW SHOWING

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SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999
NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868

1	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
4	LASTIKMAN
5	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
6	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
7	BANGKERO
8	MANO PO

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	HEAVEN
3	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	BANGKERO
5	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
6	LASTIKMAN
7	HALF PAST DEAD
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
9	MANO PO
10	KERIDA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	HEAVEN
2	DEKADA '70
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
5	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
6	LASTIKMAN
7	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
8	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
9	HALF PAST DEAD
10	KERIDA
11	BANGKERO
12	MANO PO

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
2	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
3	HEAVEN
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
7	BANGKERO
8	LASTIKMAN
9	RING (JAPANESE)
10	RING (JAPANESE)
11	MANO PO
12	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
5	RING (JAPANESE)
6	HEAVEN
7	MANO PO
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
9	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
10	KERIDA
11	LASTIKMAN
12	BANGKERO

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9296452

1	LASTIKMAN
2	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
3	MANO PO
4	RING (JAPANESE)
5	HEAVEN
6	HALF PAST DEAD
7	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM SOUTHMALL
8066868

1	HEAVEN
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
4	LASTIKMAN
5	BANGKERO
6	KERIDA
7	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
9	MANO PO
10	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	REPLI-KATE
4	LIKE MIKE
5	LASTIKMAN
6	UNFAITHFUL CONCUBINE
7	MANO PO
8	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	VAMPS
2	CLOSED
3	SWIMFAN
4	MANO PO
5	BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF
6	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
7	CLOSED
8	LASTIKMAN

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	LOTR : THE TWO TOWERS
2	LOTR : THE TWO TOWERS
3	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6	LASTIKMAN

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	BANGKERO
3	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	LASTIKMAN

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	GISING NA SI ADAN
3	MANO PO
4	SWIMFAN
5	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
6	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM BICUTAN
776-3055

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
859-2884

1	THE RING
2	LIKE MIKE
3	REPLI-KATE
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City
633-6976

1	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD VERSION) 10:50 FS/11:20 MF/1:40/4:00/6:20/8:40/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:50 END
2	LORD OF THE RINGS: The Two Towers 11:30 FS/12:00 MF/3:40/7:20/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/2:10 END

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633-7641 loc. 279

THX	LORD OF THE RINGS II - 11:00 AM (MF); 2:30 PM; 6:00 PM; 9:30 PM (LMF)
2	LORD OF THE RINGS II
3	HEAVEN
4	LORD OF THE RINGS II
5	THE RING US VERSION
6	LORD OF THE RINGS II
7	RING JAPANESE VERSION
8	HALF PAST DEAD
9	DEKADA '70
10	MANO PO

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Ermita
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1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	THE RING US VERSION
3	HEAVEN
4	RING (JAPANESE VERSION)
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6	LORD OF THE RINGS II
7	LORD OF THE RINGS II

Metro East - Marcos hway
682-8193 / 8280

1	HEAVEN
2	LORD OF THE RINGS II
3	LORD OF THE RINGS II
4	THE RING US VERSION
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6	LORD OF THE RINGS II
7	LORD OF THE RINGS II
8	LASTIKMAN

Novaliches
935-3229-30

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	LORD OF THE RINGS II
3	LASTIKMAN
4	HEAVEN
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6	MANO PO
7	THE RING US VERSION
8	SPIRIT WARRIORS

Malabon Citisquare
288-0985 / 288-2575

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	LORD OF THE RINGS II
3	HALF PAST DEAD
4	LASTIKMAN

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp.
875-1927
961-5318 / 5270

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
3	THE RING US VERSION
4	LASTIKMAN
5	LORD OF THE RINGS II
6	LORD OF THE RINGS II

Imus
471-8188 / 875-3838

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	LASTIKMAN
3	LORD OF THE RINGS II
4	HALF PAST DEAD
5	BANGKERO
6	THE RING US VERSION

Sta. Rosa Laguna

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	LORD OF THE RINGS II
3	THE RING US VERSION
4	MANO PO
5	LASTIKMAN

Bacolod
441-0453 / 0459

1	THE RING US VERSION
2	REPLI-KATE
3	MANO PO
4	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
5	HULA MO HULI KO
6	DOUBLE SEDUCTION

Iloilo
336-8077-78

1	THE RING US VERSION
2	SWIMFAN
3	VAMPS
4	LASTIKMAN
5	BROTHERHOOD OF WOLF
6	MANO PO

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Rico, Nonoy and Marco in 'Greatest Hits 2' at Music Museum

RICO J. Puno, Marco Sison and Nonoy Zuñiga will perform together for the first time in one concert, "The Greatest Hits II," to be held Feb. 13, 14 and 15 , 9 p.m. at Music Museum in Greenhills.

This is the second in a series of shows produced by Viva Concerts featuring the living legends of contemporary Filipino music.

Rico opened the series late last year in five sold-out performances with Rey Valera and Hajji Alejandro.

THREE FOR THE SHOW. (clockwise from top) Nonoy Zuñiga, Rico J. Puno and Marco Sison will sing their hits in a three-night concert.

Audiences could not seem to get enough of the trio. They rendered most of their hit recordings and joined one another in rousing production numbers.

The live recording of the concert has been released on VCDs and is now one of the hottest selling albums in the market.

"Greatest Hits II" shows every promise of becoming a huge success with Rico, Marco and Nonoy. Being a Valentine's Day presentation, the show will focus on the many romantic love songs popularized by the three balladeers.

They will sing their hits and also do numbers together. The show will be directed by Roxanne Lapus, with Raymond Lauchengco as TV director and Willy Cruz as pianist and musical director.

Rico was a folksinger who rose to unprecedented popularity during the '70s with his version of foreign favorites like "The Way We Were" and "MacArthur's Park," plus unforgettable originals like "Kapalaran," "Damdamin," and "Lupa," among others.

Marco started his career as a regular performer in the TV show "Student Canteen" during the early '80s. He has since been a constant presence in the local entertainment scene making his mark as a recording artist, actor and concert performer.

Among the songs Marco popularized are "Make Believe," "My Love Will See You Through" and "I'll Face Tomorrow."

Nonoy started out with the Family Birth Control Band until an unfortunate bombing incident during the time of martial law thrust him into the solo spotlight. His first hit was "Ako ay Ikaw Rin."

Nonoy's collaboration with composer and producer Willy Cruz resulted in some of the biggest selling songs of the 80's era. Among these are "Doon Lang," "Kumusta Ka," "Never Ever Say Goodbye," and "Init sa Magdamag."

Tickets to "Rico, Marco and Nonoy, The Greatest Hits Series 2," are now available at the Music Museum, Ticketworld at all National Bookstore branches and Viva Concerts office. Ticket prices are P1,500, P1,200 and P900. Call 413-2572.

Araneta Center ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	LASTIKMAN
Ali 2	KERIDA
Ali 3	HALF PAST DEAD
Ali 4	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
Ali 5	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
Ali 6	HEAVEN
Ali 7	MANO PO
FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers 1	HALF PAST DEAD
Farmers 2	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
ARANETA COLISEUM	
JAN 20, 22, 24	WORLD SLASHER CUP 2003
FEB 3 & 5	NCA 7 COCK DERBY
FEB 15	ABBA TRIBUTE
ELEPHANT WORLD	
JAN. 21	10 AM / 3 PM
JAN. 22	10 AM / 3 PM
JAN 23	3 PM

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	BAHID / LET'S TALK SEX
ODEON	HALF PAST DEAD
ODEON-2	MASARAP NA PUGAD / KALARO
ROBEN	BANGKERO
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	TRIPLE X / SPIDER
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	BANGKERO
CORONET B	BRAZEN WOMEN / BALLISTIC
QUEZON-1	KERIDA
REMAR	HALF PAST DEAD
REMAR-2	KERIDA
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
B	HULA MO, HULI KO
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	HALF PAST DEAD
CINEMA-2	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BANGKERO
CINEMA-2	KERIDA
CINEMA-3	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-6	LASTIKMAN
CINEMA-7	DEKADA '70
CINEMA-8	MANO PO
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-12	HALF PAST DEAD
CINEMA-14	HEAVEN
CINEMA-15	RING
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LANES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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Twice as much to lie about in the morning.
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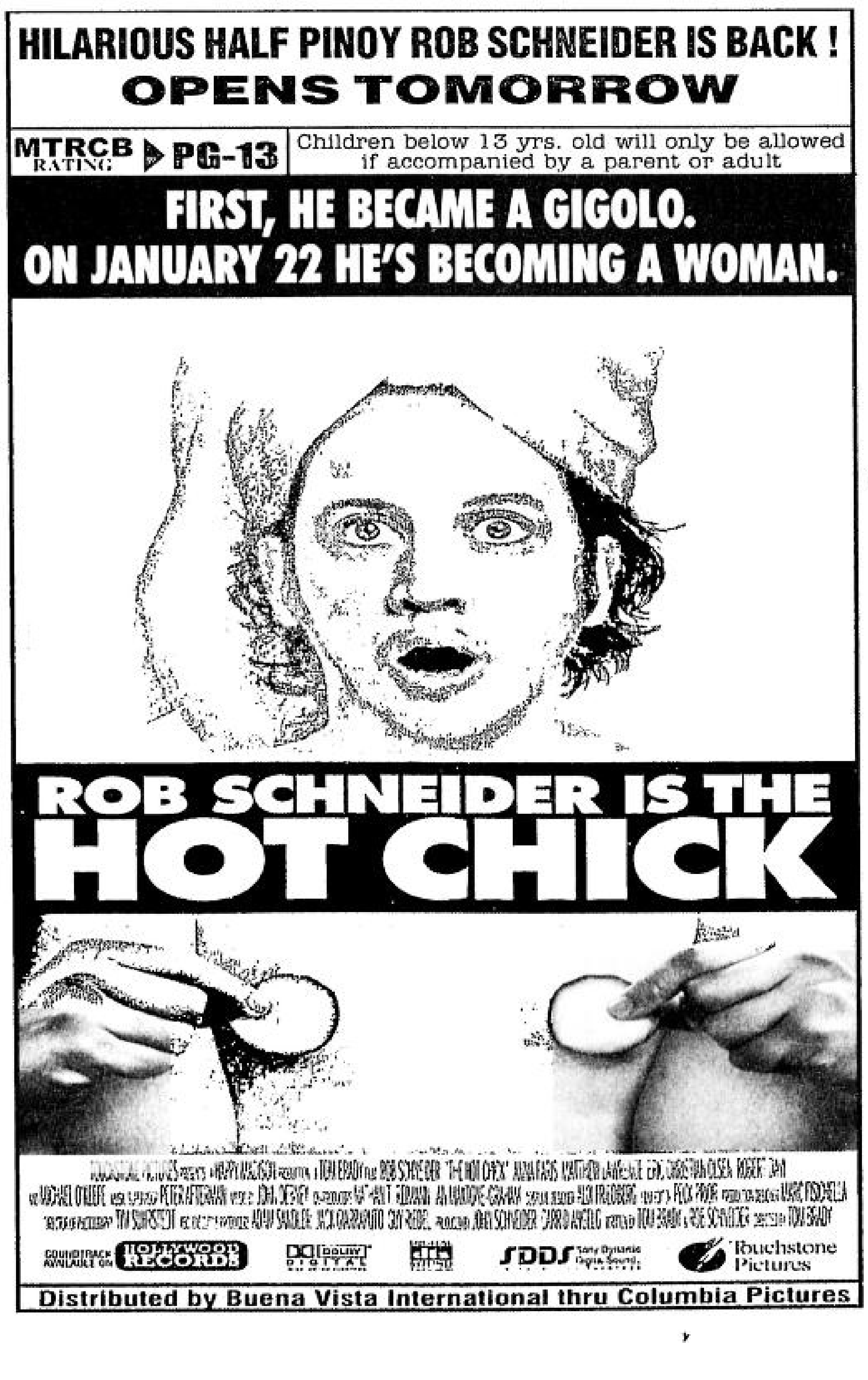
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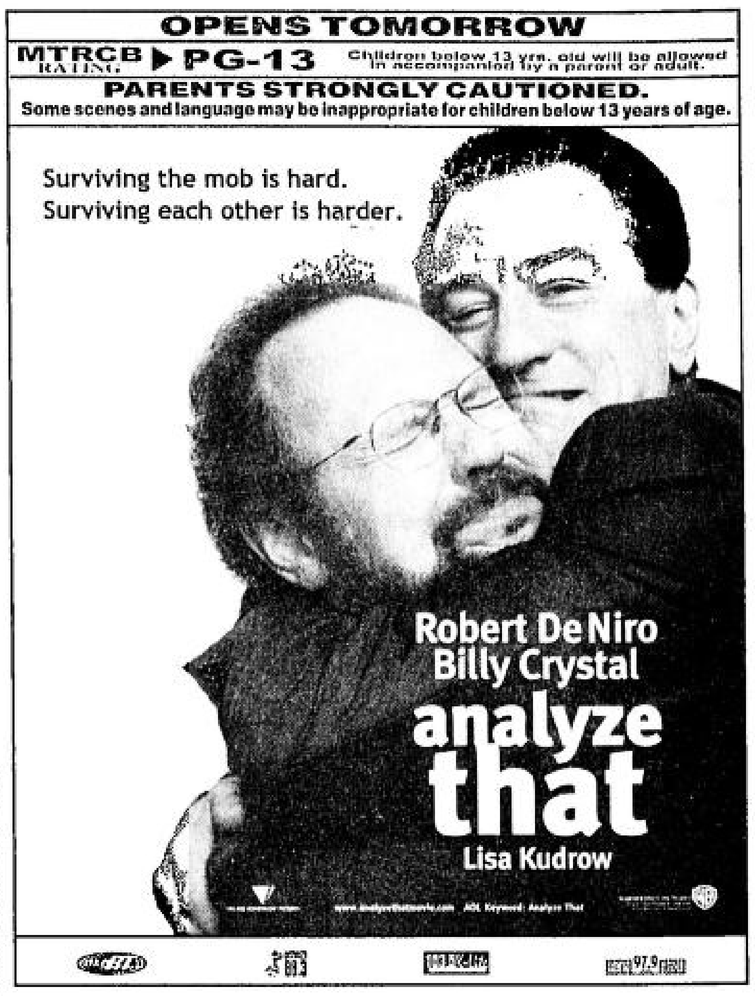
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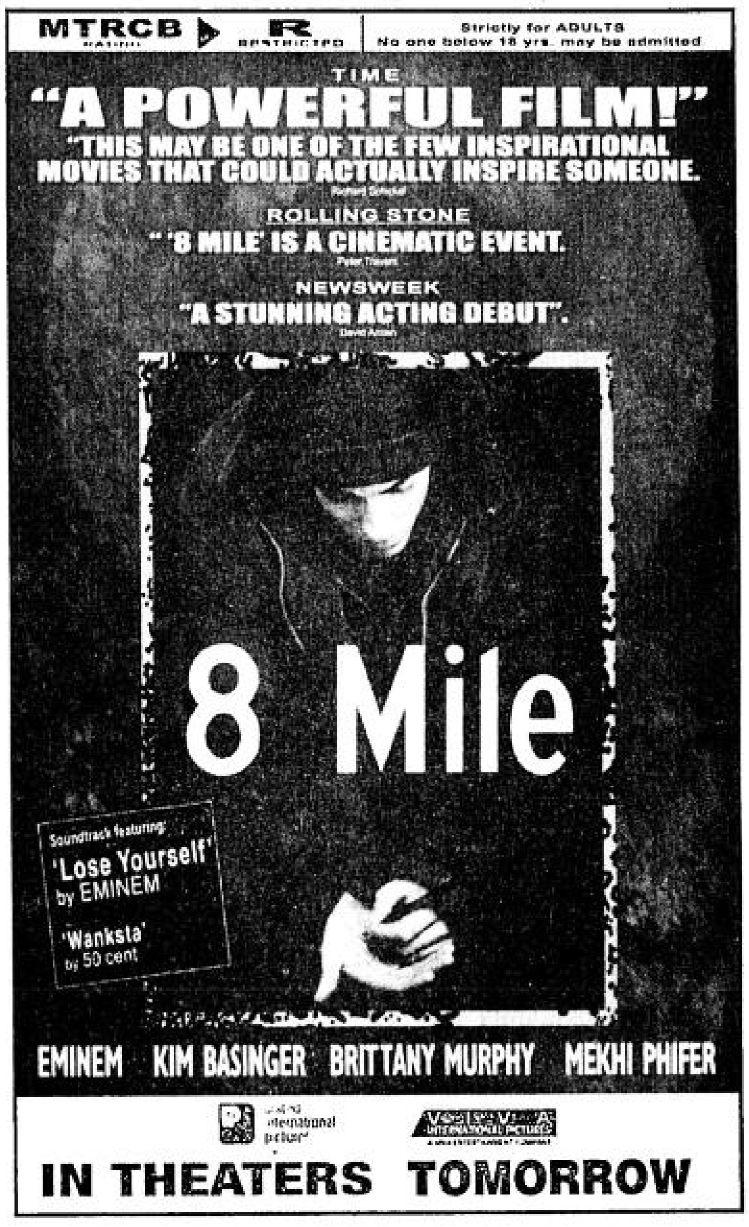
PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED.
Some scenes and language may be inappropriate for children below 13 years of age.
Surviving the mob is hard.
Surviving each other is harder.
Robert De Niro Billy Crystal
analyze that
Lisa Kudrow
AOL Keyword: Analyze That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8 Mile
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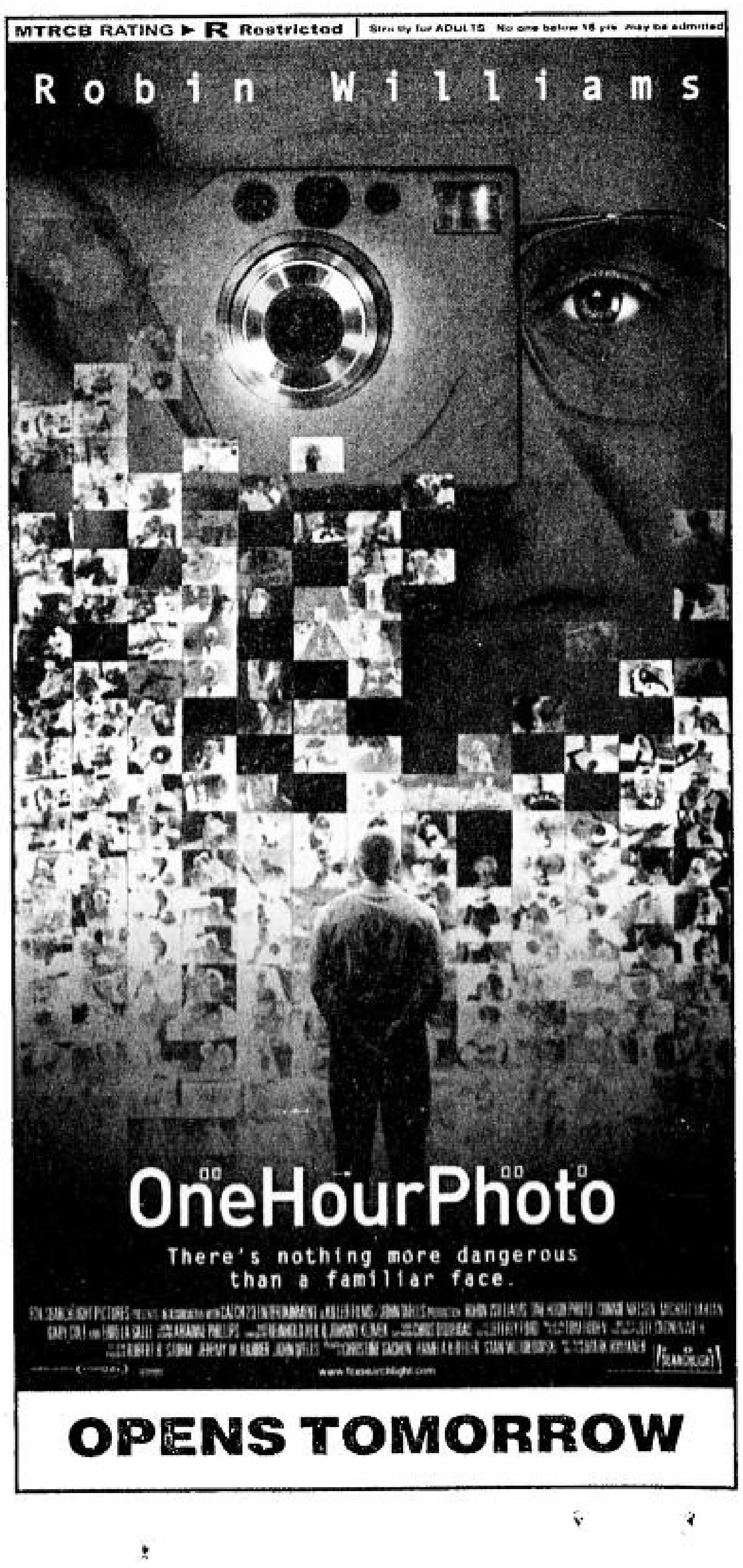
IN THEATERS TOMORROW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Robin Williams
One Hour Photo
There's nothing more dangerous than a familiar face.
OPENS TOMORROW

Best of Charlotte Church

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

FOR years now, we have been fans of **Charlotte Church**, the young soprano who became an international singing star at the tender age of 13 by performing and recording classical songs. Her lovely voice and young age have helped popularize classical music, making mainstream audiences get over their bias against "serious" music as boring and difficult to understand.

When young Charlotte sang those songs and made them her own, she breathed new, vibrant life into them and thrilled her listeners, who bought over 10 million of her albums in the next few years.

Charlotte's success has made her "the most successful female crossover artist" in the eyes of music reviewers, who have been impressed with her extensive repertoire, which includes chamber music, opera, Gaelic folk songs and well-loved numbers from Broadway musicals.

The use of young singers like Charlotte to interpret classical music has made it accessible to the mainstream market, and that is the teenage soloists lasting and most significant contribution to the world of music. She can quit singing tomorrow, but her claim to fame in the music field is already assured.

But some of Charlotte's fans worry that, as she grows older, her "magic weapon," her youthful effervescence, will cease to impress and delight, so she could end up a has-been in a few years time. Well, those fears appear to be unfounded, because four years after she became a precocious singing star, Charlotte is still packing them into her concerts all over the world, and her albums are selling as briskly as ever.

Yes, she's no longer an innocent adolescent, and has acquired the vocal heft of a young-adult singer, but she continues to enthrall audiences. This is due to the fact that she has wisely adjusted her performance style to her already being a teenager, unlike other child singers who have tried (unsuccessfully, of course) to "freeze" themselves in a perpetual childhood.

For music buffs who are still unacquainted with Charlotte's performances, the best "retroactive introduction" can be provided by her compilation album, "Prelude—the Best of Charlotte Church." It features the Welsh singing sensations finest songs from her four albums, plus four new tracks.

The 14 cuts in "Prelude" include "Pie Jesu" (from "Requiem" by **Andrew Lloyd Webber**), "In Trutina" (from "Carmina Burana" by **Carl Orff**), **Cesar Franck's** "Panis Angelicus," "Amazing Grace," "Just Wave Hello," "La Pastorella" by **Gioachino Rossini**), "She Moved Through the Fair," "Ave Maria," "Dream A Dream," "The Flower Duet," "Habanera," "The Prayer" (duet with **Josh Groban**), "All Love Can Be," "It's the Heart that Matters Most," "Tantum Ergo," "Bridge Over Troubled Water" and **Pietro Mascagni's** "Sancta Maria."

The success that Charlotte enjoys would overwhelm most youths her age, but she handles it very well. She explains: "I never wanted to be famous. I just wanted to sing. But at the same time, I didn't want to be just another pop star. I love so many different kinds of music, and I wanted to be able to do them all. Well, she's doing exactly that, in her own unique way—and is, getting many people hooked on some of the best music ever composed.

Just Married tops box office

THE NEW comedy, "Just Married," has put an end to the three-week reign of "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers" at the box office. That's quite a feat, considering that "The Two Towers" has been on a roll ever since it opened last month.

It isn't just that the weekly gross of "The Two Towers" have been declining. "Just Married" has its own strengths and is clicking with young-adult viewers in a big way.

They relate completely with its protagonists, played by **Brittany Murphy** and **Ashton Kutcher**, two mismatched newlyweds on a "honeymoon from hell" in Italy. Kutcher plays a traffic reporter with blue-collar roots, while Murphy is cast as a writer whose family is as wealthy as it is snobbish. No wonder they can't get along.

The Greatest Hits

"THE GREATEST Hits, Live at Music Museum" is now available on VCD from Viva Records. The concert starring **Rico J. Puno, Haji Alejandro** and **Rey Valera** was a big hit because the three stars sang their signature tunes from the 70s.

Songs featured in the concert and the VCD include Valera's "Kahit Maputi Na ang Buhok Ko" and "Maging Sino Ka Man;" Alejandro's "May Minamahal" and "Panakip-butas," and Puno's "Lupa" and "The Way We Were."

The three-stars concert is the first in a series of shows presented by Viva Records featuring memorable songs from the Manila Sound period.

Temyong's widow breaks her silence

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

TITA Marivic Marquez, wife of the late director **Artemio Marquez**, poured her heart out to me regarding the recent pronouncements of **Joey** and **Melanie Marquez** on nationwide TV about her.

Joey and Melanie are children of Direk Temyong from different women. But the two grew up together knowing they have the same father.

Tita Marivic is a close friend of my mom (**Inday Badiday**), that's why I know how kind-hearted Tita Marivic is. But even the gentlest souls have a saturation point.

"I can't keep silent anymore," Tita Marivic sighs. "Melanie kept referring to me as '*asa-asawahan*' of her dad. Don't I deserve even just a little respect?

"Melanie and Joey didn't even help when their dad was ill. Well, Melanie's husband gave $37. *May* $1 bills *pa nga*. That's about it. There were many reporters who were in the hospital at that time so they can attest that I'm telling the truth.

It's not the money that's the issue here. It's the sense of decency. Direk Temyong passed away three years ago. The least that Melanie and Joey can do is to honor the memory of their dad. If he were still around, I'm sure he would be the first one to be hurt to see his loved ones clash.

Although the love for our kids and for our significant other can't really be equated, one love should give way to another. Love the ones whom your loved ones love. After all, the heart has many ventricles so there ought to be enough love to go around.

Tita Marivic rambles on, "Why do they have to make *pa*-drama by saying they had to do odd jobs when they were young? My kids with Temyong are all professionals. It's in the upbringing.

"If they keep insinuating that I was just their dad's *querida*, why don't they look at themselves first? *Di ba* questionable *ang moralidad nila*?

"If they don't stop making up stories, I will expose their true colors. Please let Temyong rest in peace."

Hopefully, both Joey and Melanie will look at Tita Marivic not as someone who replaced them in their dad's heart, but as a woman who gave room for happiness in Direk Temyong's life especially when they were too busy finding their own happiness.

Guess who?

GUESS who these two members of a popular band are.

In the "*musikero* scene," they've always had a reputation of being "maniacs" (as a dusky singer revealed to me). Last New Year's eve, the band had a gig abroad along with another well-known band. The two sexy chanteuses of Band B took Stilnox sleeping pills because their adrenaline was still so high after their show and they wanted to hit the sack already.

When they were already groggy, the two guitarists of Band A dragged them to their room in the next floor and molested them. The poor girls were in a state of shock, especially the newly married one.

The guitarists admitted to the rest of the group that they did the "crime." The girls are still deliberating whether or not to press charges.

As the singer lamented to me, "It's sad that such an incident might ruin our future contracts with a foreign group. You know how they are. *May maamoy lang na gulo*, they can call off the whole thing.

"It's sad to think that the guys within the group are the ones who do foolish things. That can destroy our reputation. And instead of maintaining our good image in our gigs abroad, *mukhang hihilahin nila kami pababa* because of their behavior. *Sayang naman ang raket na pinaghirapan ng banda*."

As a music lover, I'm truly saddened to hear that the two bands whom I admire don't really bond off-stage.

Red-letter day

IT'S barely a month before lovers bare their hearts and souls on Valentine's Day. In this V-day crazy country, we can't seem to get enough of mushy concerts and sickeningly sweet Valentine goodies.

Feb. 14 is the busiest season for most entertainers. As far as everyone is concerned, you still haven't fully recovered from your holiday expenses and here comes Cupid aiming at you to part with your hard-earned cash just to celebrate the Day of hearts.

The red-letter day can leave you in the red if Cupid catches you at your most vulnerable state.

Sadly, love is a prize that comes with a price these days. I have always been a true-blue romantic. I don't turn blue even when love becomes untrue because my heart is one that never seems to get tired of loving.

Just this once, I hope artists who will have Valentine's shows will come up with something unique and out of the ordinary this February. After all, the grandest of all feelings "*L'amour*" deserves nothing less than the magic it brings us.

For feedback, e-mail friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com

Top bands perform at Purple Ostrich

EVEN after the holidays, the shows and parties continue in "Friday Night Live" at the Purple Ostrich bar, disco and concert hall at Island Cove Resort and Leisure Park in Kawit, Cavite.

Performing this month are the bands Fat Session on Jan. 24 and M Power on Jan. 31. Show starts 9 p.m.

Show charge is P150, which includes one free drink.

For details, call Purple Ostrich at (046) 434-0210, the Makati office at (02) 810-3740 or 810-3728, or Cavite, toll-free, (02) 810-3718, 810-3732 or 810-3764. Or e-mail the resort at inquiry@islandcovephil.com or log on to www.islandcovephil.com.

'Wolfhound' now available on video

TAKE a walk on the wild side and enter a world where beauty hides a beast inside.

Experience the thirst for blood and sexual obsession in C-Interactive Digital Entertainment's latest release, "Wolfhound."

Starring Playboy Playmate of the Year Julie Cialini, "Wolfhound" is an erotically charged thriller with horrifying scenes made possible with state-of-the-art special effects and animatronics.

Returning to his parents' ancestral home, Colum Kennedy discovers an Irish village populated by animalistic shapeshifters. When a ferocious wolfhound transforms into a hauntingly beautiful woman, ancient passions ignite within him.

Now, Colum must choose between his family and unleashing the power that would turn him into a monstrous creature.

"Wolfhound" is available on VHS and VCD format at P250 each.

For original copies, call C-Interactive Customer Care Hotline at 245-5011 to 12.

OPENS JANUARY 29!

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DANILO BARRIOS MARK GIL CHERRY PIE PICACHE
ALBERT MARTINEZ TONTON GUTIERREZ
and LORNA TOLENTINO
JIRO MANIO as
MAGNIFICO
Introducing
GIRLIE SEVILLA
Walang katumbas ang wagas na pagmamahal
ALLISON VII GONZALES
JON ROMANO & SUSAN AFRICA
ISABELLA DE LEON
DINDIN LLARENA JOSEPH ROBLE
Theme song sung by:
GARY VALENCIANO
Directed by Maryo J. de los Reyes, DGPI
A Violett Films Production
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POWER PLANT
CINEMA
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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

HALF PAST DEAD P13 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	LORD OF THE RINGS "TWO TOWERS" GP 12:50,4:30,8:10	LORD OF THE RINGS "TWO TOWERS" GP 2:00, 5:40, 9:20
THE RING P13 12:40,3:00,5:20, 7:40,10:00	HEAVEN R18 12:30, 2:45, 5:10, 7:25, 9:40	LORD OF THE RINGS "TWO TOWERS" GP 11:30, 3:10, 6:50, 10:30

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11:00, 2:40,
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GP
CINEMA 2 THE RING
11:20, 1:40, 4:00,
6:20, 8:40
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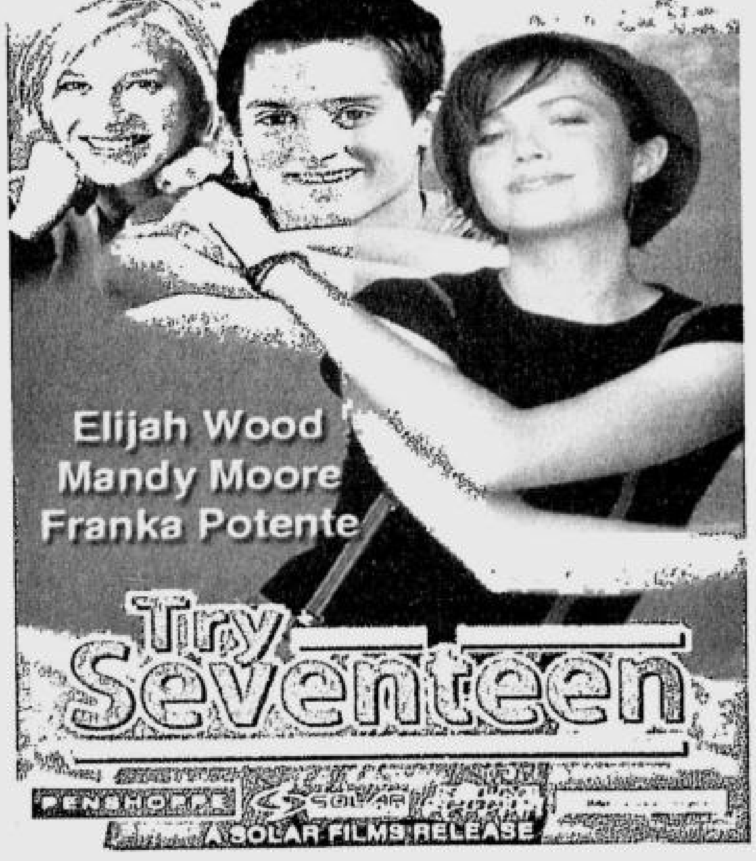
Parents are strongly warned against bringing children below 13. Some scenes can offend them.



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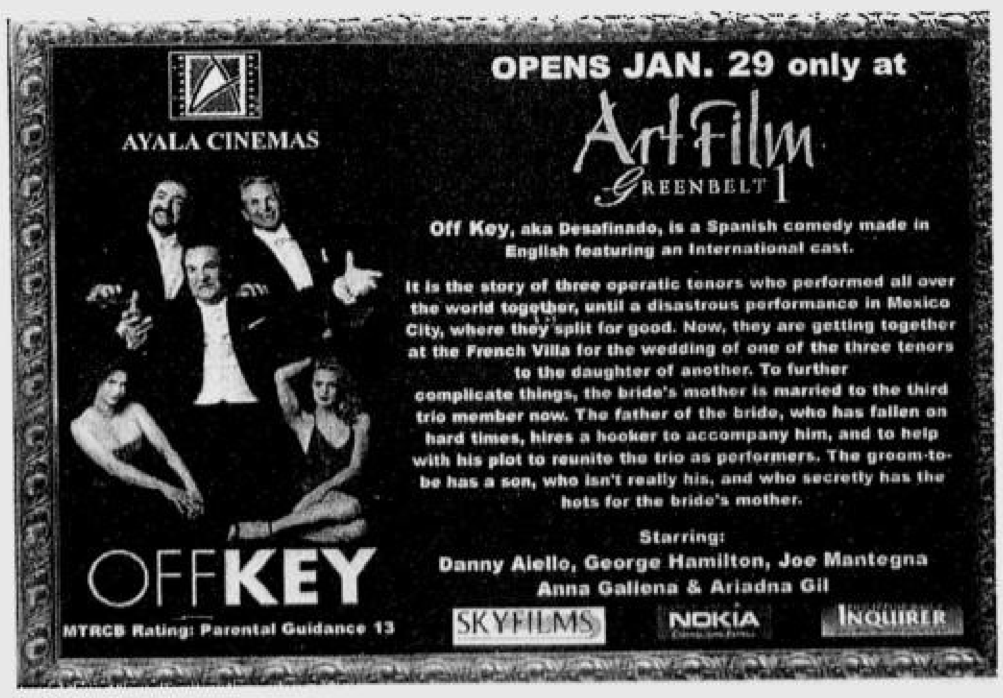


AYALA CINEMAS
OPENS JAN. 29 only at
ArtFilm
GREENBELT 1
Off Key, aka Desafinado, is a Spanish comedy made in English featuring an International cast.
It is the story of three operatic tenors who performed all over the world together, until a disastrous performance in Mexico City, where they split for good. Now, they are getting together at the French Villa for the wedding of one of the three tenors to the daughter of another. To further complicate things, the bride's mother is married to the third trio member now. The father of the bride, who has fallen on hard times, hires a hooker to accompany him, and to help with his plot to reunite the trio as performers. The groom-to-be has a son, who isn't really his, and who secretly has the hots for the bride's mother.
Starring:
Danny Aiello, George Hamilton, Joe Mantegna
Anna Galiena & Ariadna Gil
OFF KEY
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13
SKYFILMS NOKIA INQUIRER

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Jazz musical 'Chicago,' 'tricky' drama 'The Hours' win top Golden Globes

DOUBLE VICTORY. "Chicago" stars Richard Gere and Renee Zellweger. REUTERS

BEVERLY HILLS, California—The sultry jazz musical "Chicago" won the Golden Globe for best musical-comedy Sunday, while "The Hours" was honored as best film drama.

Dramatic performance honors went to Jack Nicholson for playing a depressed retiree in "About Schmidt" and Nicole Kidman for her role as suicidal writer Virginia Woolf in "The Hours."

"I don't know whether to be happy or ashamed because I thought we made a comedy," Nicholson said.

The tragicomic "About Schmidt" features him as an aging man searching for meaning at the end of his life.

Kidman, who disguised her face with prosthetics for the role, said she was just glad "The Hours" was made into a film.

"It was a tricky movie in terms of the subject matter," she said.

"Chicago" co-stars Renee Zellweger and Richard Gere won for best musical-comedy acting.

Meryl Streep and Chris Cooper received supporting performer honors for the loopy screenwriting comedy "Adaptation."

Immigrant saga

Martin Scorsese received the best director for the Civil War era immigrant saga "Gangs of New York," a film he had wanted to make for decades that, once completed, was delayed for more than a year by Miramax Films.

"Maybe 'dream come true' is a cliche because cliches are true. But it really is," he said.

Zellweger, who played a star-struck prisoner in "Chicago" trying to beat a murder charge, thanked co-star Catherine Zeta-Jones, whom she beat in the category.

"You're a goddess and I'm so glad the world now knows what you can do," Zellweger told her while onstage.

"I'm literally totally shocked. I don't win anything," said Gere, who played a slick lawyer in the musical. "And I didn't even want to do this movie. That's what I know."

Streep, a frequent awards recipient who was also nominated in the dramatic actress category for her work in "The Hours," said she wasn't prepared to win for "Adaptation."

"Oh my God, I've just been nominated 789 times and I was getting so settled over there for a long winter's nap," she said. "I didn't have anything prepared because it's been like (since) the Pleistocene era that I won anything."

Reality and fiction

The actress last won a Golden Globe in 1983, for "Sophie's Choice." (She's won two others, for "The French Lieutenant's Woman" in 1982 and "Kramer vs. Kramer" in 1980.)

Blending reality and fiction, "Adaptation" follows the agonized efforts of screenwriter Charlie Kaufman as he adapts author Susan Orlean's book "The Orchid Thief" for the screen. Kaufman jokingly fantasizes in the film's climax that Orlean was a drug-crazed, would-be killer.

"Susan Orlean, I apologize for the second half," said Streep, who played her in the film.

Cooper, who played a stringy-haired and toothless orchid poacher chronicled in Orlean's book, offered his thanks, saying: "You've given millions and millions of stringy-haired and toothless people a lot of hope."

He also thanked co-star Nicolas Cage as well as "Nic Cage," a reference to Cage's portrayal of screenwriter Charlie Kaufman and his fictitious twin brother, Donald.

Kaufman lost the best screenplay prize, however, to Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor for "About Schmidt," adapted from the novel by Louis Begley and starring Jack Nicholson as a retiree looking for meaning in his life.

Irish rockers U2 won the best movie song award for "The Hands That Built America" from "Gangs of New York" and composer Elliot Goldenthal received the best original score award for "Frida."

The Pedro Almodovar-directed Spanish drama "Talk to Her," about two men in love with comatose women in the same hospital, was chosen best foreign film.

The ceremony, hosted by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, is considered by some to be a barometer for the upcoming Academy Award nominations in February.

"You have no idea how many men I've had to sleep with to get this award," said Kim Cattrall, who won in the TV supporting actress category for her role as the most promiscuous of the four women on "Sex and the City."

TV drama

"The Shield" won for best TV drama, upsetting such major shows as "The Sopranos" and "The West Wing," and its star, Michael Chiklis, was named best actor in a drama series. His Golden Globe follows his surprise Emmy victory last year for playing a rogue cop on the violent, profanity-laced series on the little-watched FX cable channel.

HBO's acerbic sitcom "Curb Your Enthusiasm" won best TV comedy series.

The dramatic TV actress award went to Edie Falco for her performance as the unhappy wife of gangster Tony Soprano in HBO's "The Soprano."

Gasping that she was suffering from laryngitis, she accepted her award by flapping her hands and whispering, "I can't talk."

Jennifer Aniston won best TV comedy actress for NBC's "Friends," while Tony Shalhoub received the TV comedy actor's trophy for the USA detective show "Monk."

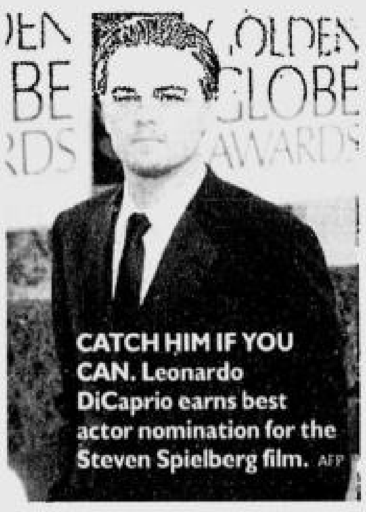
Gene Hackman accepted the Cecil B. DeMille Award, which honors the star of "The Conversation" and "Crimson Tide" for his career spanning more than 80 films. His roles in "The French Connection" and "Unforgiven" won him both Golden Globes and Academy Awards and he received an additional Golden Globe honor last year for the comedy "The Royal Tenenbaums." *AP*

BEST IN THE DRAMA CROP. Meryl Streep (left) is best supporting actress for "Adaptation" and Nicole Kidman is best actress for "The Hours." REUTERS

ABOUT JACK. Best actor in drama Jack Nicholson wins for his role as a depressed retiree in "About Schmidt." REUTERS

ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER. Veteran of 80 films, Gene Hackman accepts the Cecil B. DeMille award. AP

MEXICAN BEAUTY. Actress Salma Hayek waves to the crowd as she arrives for the awards ceremony. AFP

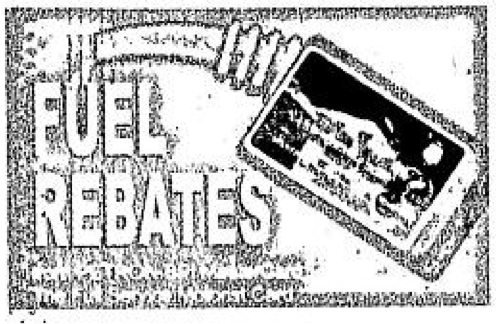

CATCH HIM IF YOU CAN. Leonardo DiCaprio earns best actor nomination for the Steven Spielberg film. AFP

GLITTER AND GLAMOR. Actresses Sharon Stone (left) and Halle Berry act as presenters. AFP

NOT PROMISCUOUS. "Sex and the City" best supporting actress Kim Catrall. AFP

TV COMEDY BABE. Jennifer Aniston clutches her best actress in a TV series or comedy trophy for "Friends." AFP

MINI-SERIES' BEST. Uma Thurman holds her best actress in a mini-series trophy for "Hysterical Blindness." AFP


FUEL REBATES

TUESDAY,
JANUARY 21, 2003

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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BUSINESS

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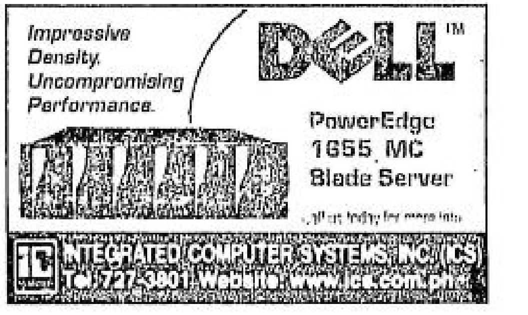
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11-month trade surplus down 40.4%

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S trade surplus in the first 11 months of last year fell 40.4 percent to $1.25 billion, from $2.1 billion in the same period last year, as imports grew 12.7 percent to $30.9 billion, outpacing export growth that hit only 9 percent to $32.15 billion.

The National Statistics Office yesterday said merchandise imports in November surged 46.5 percent to almost $3 billion from year-ago level. In the same month, the trade surplus was $118 million versus $591 million a year earlier, marking the third consecutive month of year-on-year declines.

Despite its implication on the trade surplus, analysts welcomed the November import growth, the highest rate recorded since June 1994 when imports registered a 53-percent increase, saying that it was considered an indication of improving economic activities and higher export growth in the future since most of the country's top exports, particularly electronics, require imported inputs.

"This is a good sign for the country's gross domestic product for the fourth quarter," AB Capital Securities economist Jose Vistan said. "The moves of the government to explore new markets for exports are beginning to bear fruits."

But Vistan also said the extraordinary year-on-year growth in November was also influenced by the lower base in November 2001, when the biggest annual drop in imports was recorded.

When asked about the month-on-month rise in imports, ATR Kim Eng Securities economist Luz Lorenzo said "the higher crude oil prices may have caused the uptick."

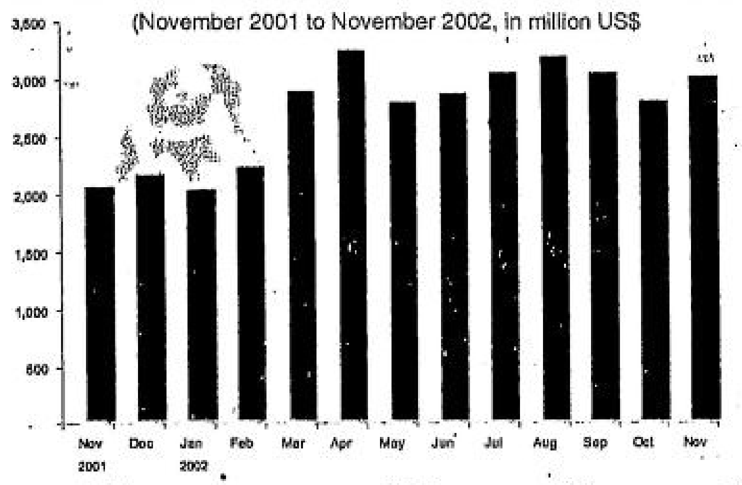
Import payments for electronics and components, inputs to the country's biggest export earners, rose by 137.2 percent from a year ago and accounted for 26.6 percent of the country's total import bill.

Purchases of raw materials and intermediate goods consisting of unprocessed raw and semi-processed raw materials, which registered an increase of 37.4 percent, accounted for 34.8 percent of the aggregate bill.

Importation of capital goods, comprising 42.9 percent of the total bill, accelerated by 52.8 percent year-on-year. Capital goods importation included telecommunication equipment and electrical machinery, which accounted for 22.9 percent of the total.

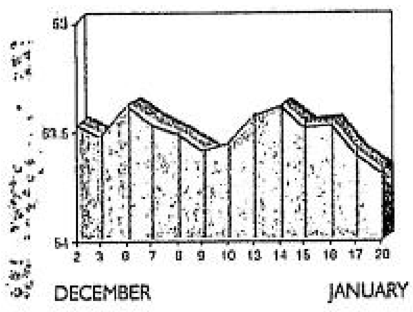
11-MONTH TRADE/ B3

Total Imports



INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P53.69 $

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 20, 2003

¥118.14 = $1

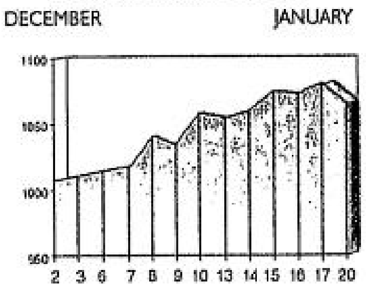
As of 5 p.m., Jan.20, 2003

GOLD: $356.50-357.00
per ounce Hong Kong, Jan.20, 2003

STOCK MARKET

Stocks down

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARE prices closed lower yesterday due to profit taking due to losses on Wall Street and a dearth of fresh news to spur trading, brokers said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index fell 14.90 points or 1.38 percent to 1,066.70.

Volume fell to 153.6 million shares worth P166.72 million from Friday's 199.46 million shares worth P487.92 million on Friday.

"With no fresh news to sustain interest, investors decided to take profits," said Gomer Tan of Regina Capital Development.

"The market is unable to break out of the 1,080 resistance so it has to consolidate and go back to correct at maybe around 1,050."

Elena Poncesa of Unicapital Securities said "overall sentiment is weak" largely due to losses on Wall Street on Friday, exacerbated by rising oil prices.

San Miguel Corp. A shed 50 centavos to P57.50, while B shares were P1.50 lower at 63.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. shed P5 to P57.50, while Bank of the Philippine Islands inched down P1 at P37.

Ayala Corp. fell 5 centavos to P4.45 while unit Ayala Land Inc. lost 20 centavos to P5. *AFP*

RP bonds remain Templeton's top Asian pick

SINGAPORE—The relatively high returns that Philippine sovereign dollar bonds offer make them a risk worth taking, despite the country's burgeoning fiscal problems, according to fund manager Franklin Templeton Investments.

"We are getting paid for the risk in the Philippines," Michael Hasenstab, portfolio manager and analyst at Templeton's International Bonds Department, said in an interview.

"It's obviously a higher risk than Malaysia, a higher credit risk than Korea, but we are earning a significant carry," he said. Templeton is overweight in Philippine bonds.

Carry refers to the difference between the cost of financing the bonds and the returns obtained from the investment.

Hasenstab said Templeton's returns from Philippines bonds in the 12 months to end-November were around 20 percent, compared with slightly above 10 percent for both Malaysia and Korea.

Templeton Investments manages about $257 billion worth of assets worldwide, of which $88 billion are in fixed-income funds.

Philippines dollar bonds represented 6.9 percent of the $146.4 million invested in the Templeton Emerging Markets Bond Fund and 3.0 percent of the $183.8 million in the Templeton Global Bond Fund. Both the funds are co-managed by Hasenstab.

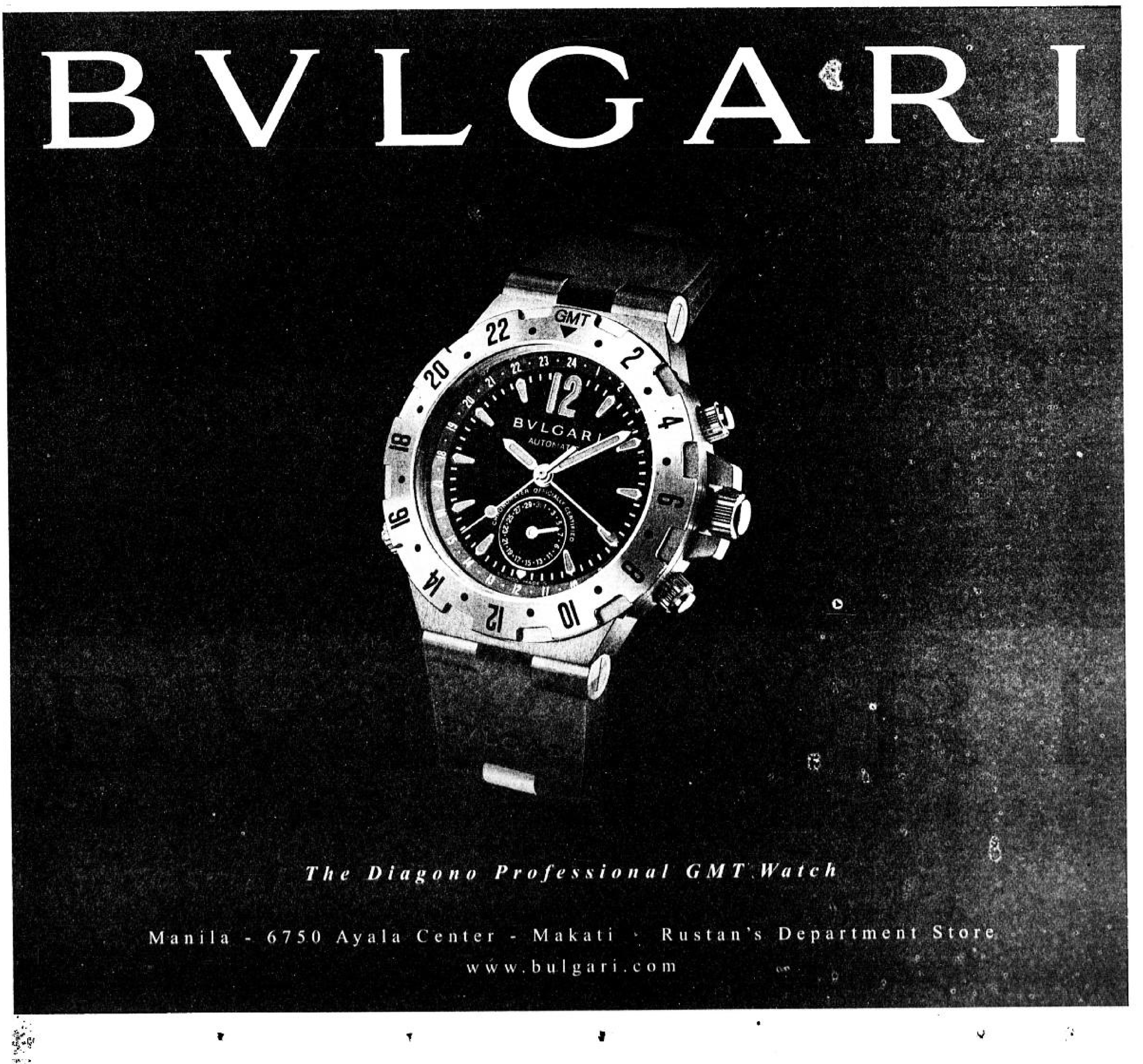
Malaysian and South Korean dollar bonds represented 4.55 percent and 4.50 percent of the Emerging Markets Bond Fund.

Hasenstab said that while foreign investors were worried over the Philippines' rapid fiscal deterioration, the fact that the country had continued tapping successfully the international capital market showed that investors believed that the risk was still worth taking.

Manila's latest official projection for the 2002 deficit is 5.6 percent of gross domestic product, or about P223 billion. The deficit target was raised three times last year.

This year, the government is hoping to keep the deficit to within 4.7 percent of GDP as a result

RP/ B4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Urgent at arms

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

AT THE ONSET let me come out in the open. I belong to the multitude who still do not see the urgency of "constitutional change"—or con-cha, for short.

We see this kind of "urgency" every now and then, particularly under every administration. Through the years, we even developed a nickname for the exercise.

Today, as a tribute to the return of ballroom dancing in our country, we call it as "Charter change" or Cha-cha.

Our leaders agree—basically, of course, just among themselves—that we have to change the 16-year-old Constitution, if we want to solve our biggest problem. And that is, the economy. The Constitution, it seems, is the root cause of all smuggling which is rubbing out a lot of our jobs.

It is just in the manner of doing it that our so-called leaders differ. The likes of Gloriaetta and Tita Cory are going for a constitutional convention—or con-con.

For Speaker Jose de Venecia, the best time to amend the Constitution is right away, and the best way is through a constituent assembly—or con-ass.

* * *

FOR still unknown reasons, although some say he just wants to hurry it up while he can still become Prime Minister, Yoda Venecia is pushing for a con-ass.

In a way, it is fast. We can do all the amendments at the flick of a finger. Whose finger it is, well, is an entirely different matter altogether.

They say the con-con is expensive. We will need to pay the salary of the delegates and their staff. We must save money because the government does not have money.

In a con-ass, on the other hand, the lawmakers are doing to do the work. All they need are only hundred of billions of pesos worth of pork. Big savings!

* * *

MOREOVER, a con-con takes time. First, we elect the delegates. By the time they are through fighting over what to wear, barong or suit, it's already the Second Coming.

In comparison, the present Congress is fast and efficient in doing its job, which is the budget, in which they hid a lot of pork.

* * *

INCONSEQUENTIALLY, nothing is mentioned about the need for Cha-cha or con-cha either through con-con or con-ass, in any economic plan here to Tacurong.

In business, moreover, they already did various surveys on what they thought were our biggest problems, and the highest pointer was, consistently, too much politics.

Nobody knows if the Cha-cha or con-cha can remove all politics from the face of the nation. It is just clear that there's a lot of politics behind it all.

And so the question is this: If we do the Cha-cha, assuming it is an urgent exercise, are we doing it for the economy or for more politics?

* * *

ASIDE from politics, the next biggest problems of business, according to survey after survey, are peace and order, and corruption.

The Japanese business chamber lists security and labor as the biggest problems, but not corruption, which may or may not say who do lot of corrupting in this country.

The US business chamber also thinks it's the judicial system, because a lot of interference from the courts.

Really, nobody says that they will only invest here if we amend the Constitution.. Who said we have to do the Cha-cha or con-cha.

With all overdue disrespect, boss, up your con-ass!

* * *

SIMPLY, those who insist that we need to change the Constitution, pronto, are some 126 congressmen.

Whadayano—they happen to belong to the ruling coalition, meaning, they are the boys of Yoda, plus whoever is behind him.

Not coincidentally, therefore, Yoda believes in his heart that we can only amend the Constitution no other way but through the con-ass.

That means that those same congressmen, the only ones who insist on doing the Cha-cha, in the first place, will do all the amending. How very convenient!

* * *

WELL, as they say, Yoda is a practical man. Maybe that's why he is pushing for the con-ass at this time of the year when we always feel upbeat.

At the start of the year, consumer confidence is high, and it shows in the surveys. If we feel a bit upbeat today, somebody must always try to bring us down again.

That can be easily accomplished with all this talk about Cha-cha. It is getting close to a

BREAKTIME/ B3

Farm output up 3.7% in Q4

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE AGRICULTURE sector, which makes up about a fifth of the country's economic output, posted a 3.69-percent growth in the fourth quarter of last year despite the El Niño dry spell, the Department of Agriculture yesterday said.

In a briefing yesterday, Agriculture Secretary Luis P. Lorenzo Jr. said that for this year, the sector was expected to expand by 4 percent.

Lorenzo said that last year's growth, which came largely from the crops, livestock and fishery sectors, was higher than the targeted range of 3.1-3.5 percent.

The fourth quarter, the main harvest period, is the main indicator of the country's agriculture output for the entire year.

The agriculture sector growth in year 2002 could be attributed to the rebound of the crops sub-sector that contributed 48.03 percent to the total agricultural production.

The Department of Agriculture said the farming sector grew 6.19 percent in the fourth quarter of last year from the same period in the previous year.

In the third quarter, the sector grew a modest 0.86 percent year-on-year due to a contraction in corn and unmilled rice output.

Officials said the six-month dry spell in the second and third quarters devastated rice, corn and other major crops.

The unmilled rice or palay production posted a record high of 13.27 million metric tons, surpassing last year's output by 316,000 metric tons.

Lorenzo said this was brought about by the improvement in the yields of palay farms due to the extensive use of certified and hybrid seeds and the favorable weather condition.

Bigger harvests and improved yields were noted in Central Luzon, Western Visayas and Socsargen.

There was, however, a 4.55-percent drop in the corn output due to the dry spell that hit major corn producing regions of Cagayan Valley, Northern Mindanao and Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

The increased livestock production was sustained during the last quarter of 2002, with a growth of 4.39 percent in output.

The poultry and fishery sub-sectors expanded by 6.13 percent and 6.77 percent, respectively.

Farmgate prices went up by an average of 3.56 percent during the period.

BSP rules on bank dissolution tightened

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE MONETARY Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has tightened its policies on banks' declaration of dissolution or insolvency, prescribing specific steps and prohibiting certain acts during the process.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said two new circulars, to be issued soon, would implement Sections 68 and 70 of the General Banking Law of 2000.

"The circulars would make it clear to everybody in the banking sector what they should and should not do during the dissolution and insolvency process," said the central bank official.

The central bank specified in one of the unnumbered circulars "that no voluntary dissolution should be undertaken by a bank without prior approval of the Monetary Board." The request for approval should be accompanied by a liquidation plan.

he plan, according to the circular, must include the inventory and appraisal of assets and liabilities, a notice to creditors, liquidation of assets, the final notice to claimants and creditors, an inventory of the remaining claims against the bank, and distribution plans for the proceeds from the asset sale.

For banks declaring insolvency, their directors and officers are prohibited to tamper with the records, appropriate for himself or another party the banks' assets, receive any deposit or receivables, use the banks' funds, transfer any security or property of the banks.

The directors and officers must turn over the banks' records and assets to the designated receiver, usually the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

Reyes said the central bank was also studying a proposal to allow banks with heavy exposure to small and medium enterprises to open new branches in line with the government's thrust to encourage the growth of SMEs.

Reyes said that under the proposed circular, all types of banks from rural to universal lenders could put up new branches if they meet the requirements, particularly the required level of SME loan portfolio.

"The plan requires a bank to have an exposure of between 30 and 50 percent to SMEs in its loan portfolio. We still have to fine-tune the levels," said the deputy governor.

Aside from the SME portfolio, a bank must have a capital adequacy ratio of 12 percent.

The BSP had declared a moratorium on new bank and branch licenses since 1999. The General Banking Law of June 2001 also provided a three-year freeze on licensing new banks and branches.

GOINGS-ON

IFC credit facility

EAST West Banking Corp. (EWBC) said it was chosen one of two banks in the country that would participate in the recently established $20-million Philippine Trade Facility (PTF). The selection was formalized through the signing of the Tripartite Framework Agreement by officials of EWBC led by its president, Elrey Ramos, Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corp. (HSBC) and International Finance Corp. (IFC) in simple ceremonies held last Dec. 19, 2002 at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel.

The facility is aimed at providing medium-sized local commercial banks that are active in import trading access to increase trade confirmation limits. Under the agreement, IFC will guarantee 40 percent of the incremental confirmation facility EWBC maintains with HSBC, with the latter covering the remaining 60-percent risk.

The trade enhancement program was developed by IFC and HSBC to assist medium-sized commercial banks secure higher credit limits for the issuance of confirmed letters of credit.

Anzcham forum

THE AUSTRALIAN-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce (Philippines) Inc. will hold a breakfast meeting on Jan. 22, 2003, to give its members a balanced view of what to expect in the business environment for the year.

The topics and speakers are: Macroeconomic outlook and growth sectors, University of Asia & Pacific School of Economics dean Bernardo Villegas, and political environment—run-up to 2004, The INQUIRER's political analyst, columnist and editorial consultant Amando Doronila and De La Salle University Prof. Efren S. Cruz. Peter Wallace of the Wallace Business Forum will be the moderator.

The meeting will be held at 7/F Oakwood Premier, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati City. It will start at 7:30 a.m. For reservations, please contact the organizer through events@anzcham.com or tel. no. 755-8840.

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23 MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	560,000	475,000
24 MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"		550,000
25 METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	100,000	
26. METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	150,000	100,000
27 MT. MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.)	350,000	
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INGASCO, INC.
launches expansion plans

Industrial gases manufacturer and related service provider INGASCO, INC. recently announced plans to install a New Nitrogen Liquefaction Plant in the company's site in Batangas, where it has an existing Air Separation Plant.

With an estimated cost of US$6 million, the expansion program will more than double INGASCO's total production capacity of Liquid Nitrogen/Oxygen to about 315 tons per day, thus allowing the company to meet increasing market demand.

A joint venture company with Nippon Sanso Corporation, Japan, one of the leading industrial gases manufacturers in the world, INGASCO, Inc. has a state-of-the-art Air Separation Plant that produces High Purity Liquid/Gaseous Oxygen, Nitrogen and Argon. In addition, the company also has a liquid carbon dioxide plant and a hydrogen plant.

INGASCO's products and services have supported several Philippine industries over the last 10 years, such as steel manufacturing, metal processing and fabrication, chemicals, electronics and semiconductors.

INGASCO President & CEO Mr. Norikazu Ishikawa noted the significance of High Quality Nitrogen in the electronics and semiconductors manufacturing process. "Huge volumes of High Quality Nitrogen are consistently required in these industries. However as the Philippine electronics and related industries continue to grow, it is anticipated that such Nitrogen supply will encounter serious shortage in the near future," he said, adding that the company's plan to invest in a Nitrogen Liquefaction Plant aims to comply with increasing demand for Nitrogen. The new plant is scheduled to start operations, in early 2004.

"We at INGASCO believe that our expansion program will be welcomed and will be of great service to every industry in the Philippines, therefore contributing to the country's stable economic growth," Mr. Ishikawa said.

ADVT.

RP scores EU effort to cheat WTO drug program

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINES has assailed the European Union for proposing to limit only to infectious diseases the type of medicines that developing countries may import under the compulsory licensing program of the World Trade Organization.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II said the Philippines would take a "firm, uncompromising" stand in advocating a more liberal interpretation of the diseases that the WTO program would cover.

Giving in to the European Union's position, he warned, would mitigate the broad scope of public health concerns recognized in the WTO's Doha declaration.

Roxas said the European Union's proposal would detract from the flexibility granted by the WTO.

"Countries should determine on their own what constitutes public health problems without need of confirmation or advice by any other country or international organization," he insisted.

EU Commissioner Pascal Lamy earlier proposed to seek the advice of the World Health Organization to break a deadlock in negotiations on the implementation of the Doha declaration.

Discussions have bogged down due to differences on three issues: scope of the diseases to which the solution may be applicable; modality to access domestic manufacturing capacity; and, safeguard measures against trade diversion.

BIR, Customs confident of hitting targets

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT'S main tax-collecting agencies said yesterday they would be able to hit their targets this year.

In a news conference, the Bureau of Internal Revenue expressed confidence it could collect at least P424 billion by year's end.

The Bureau of Customs was likewise confident its collections would reach P105.6 billion.

The heads of the two bureaus said ongoing reforms in the country's taxation system should help them reach their goals.

The BIR and BOC were earlier expected to collect some P465.6 billion and P106.8 billion, but recent developments forced the government to cut these targets.

Unlike in previous years, the internal revenue and customs bureaus were asked to determine their own revenue targets for 2003.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said since the collection aims were self-determined, the bureaus would be held more accountable for their contributions to state coffers.

BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno and Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo said their respective targets were realistic and achievable.

Meeting revenue targets would allow the government to keep its budget deficit within its P202-billion forecast.

The budget deficit, however, was revised from an earlier target of P142.1 billion.

The P60-billion gap was used to reduce the revenue targets of the BIR and BOC.

DA vows to help coffee sector

AGRICULTURE Secretary Luis Lorenzo recently said the government was set to rehabilitate the country's coffee industry in a bid to restore the Philippines' status as a coffee exporter, create additional jobs and respond to the challenge posed by reduced tariffs on coffee imports.

The country last year imported close to 23,000 metric tons of coffee. The influx of imported coffee drastically increased in 1997 following the country's entry into the World Trade Organization.

Lorenzo said the government was expecting the domestic and international demand for coffee to rise in the short-term. This is in view of the rapid increase in specialty coffee shops in urban centers and the rapid growth of the popularity of coffee consumption in the youth and young professionals sectors.

The increased domestic demand could only fuel a rise in importation if we do not act fast, Lorenzo said. He said the country must also eye the growing opportunities in the international coffee market with the rise in coffee consumption even among traditionally tea-drinking countries in Europe.

Lorenzo recalls that the country used to be self-sufficient in its coffee supply.

"We even used to export 14,000 metric tons of coffee annually to other countries," he said. Philippine coffee exports peaked at about 43,000 metric tons in 1986 generating some $122.5 million in revenues for the country.

Today, the coffee sector not only competes with cheap imports but it also has to contend with declining productivity. The slump has seriously affected farmers and laborers, especially in upland areas, Lorenzo explained.

Sultan Kudarat is currently the country's biggest coffee-producing province, followed by Cavite.

Asia has a 21-percent share in the international coffee market with Vietnam and Indonesia sharing the lead with seven percent each of the region's total output. The global market is dominated by the Americas with 62 percent.

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Breaktime

From page B2

blackmail, you see. Our congressmen are actually forcing it down our throat.

Why is it such an urgent task? Is it a matter of life and death? Or is it just a matter of life and death for somebody's political ambition?

* * *

REPORTS from abroad indicate there is likely going to be war in the Middle East. It is bad for us. Oil prices are already going crazy.

Our congressmen must be thinking that the only way for us to bring down oil prices is the con-ass. Bright!

Or maybe we need to turn this Congress into a con-ass, because kidnappers and terrorists will surrender at the sight of a new Constitution. Superb!

Finally, the con-ass is the only way for a lot of our politicos to stay in power. All they have to do is remove the constitutional limit on their terms.

* * *

TODAY, although he doesn't look it yet, Metrobank president Antonio Abacan turns 60 years old.

I heard that Abacan was thinking of retirement. He was already looking at a consultancy job for a large group.

Also, somebody in this cute administration offered him a seat in the Monetary Board, the policy-making body of the Bangko Sentral.

No dice! Metrobank founder and chair George Ty actually talked Abacan out of all this nonsense. Abacan stays for a while. A long, long while!

11-month trade surplus . . .

From page B1

Purchases of mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials increased by 61.2 percent from a year ago while importation of consumer goods also posted a 19.2-percent gain.

Japan accounted for 20.2 percent or the bulk of the country's import bill, rising by 33.2 percent from a year ago while the United States followed with a 17.9-percent share.

Other major sources of imports during the period were: Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Thailand and Saudi Arabia.

The robust import growth in November also reflected the return to the double-digit growth of the country's export receipts in the same period.

Regional exports are likewise increasing substantially. For the month of November, exports to China went up by 47 percent, to Hong Kong by 83 percent, South Korea by 26 percent, Taiwan by 14 percent and Malaysia by 37 percent.

Economists have said the eighth straight month of annual expansion in exports signaled that the country was set to achieve its 2002 export growth target of around 8 percent as stronger regional trade made up for weaker sales to the United States.

But economists said the risk of war in Iraq and a further slowdown in US demand would continue to cloud the prospects.

"The latest figures do not change the cautious outlook for trade in first half 2003 given the prevailing external risks," Charlie Lay, an economist at 4Cast Ltd., said in a note. *With a report from Reuters*

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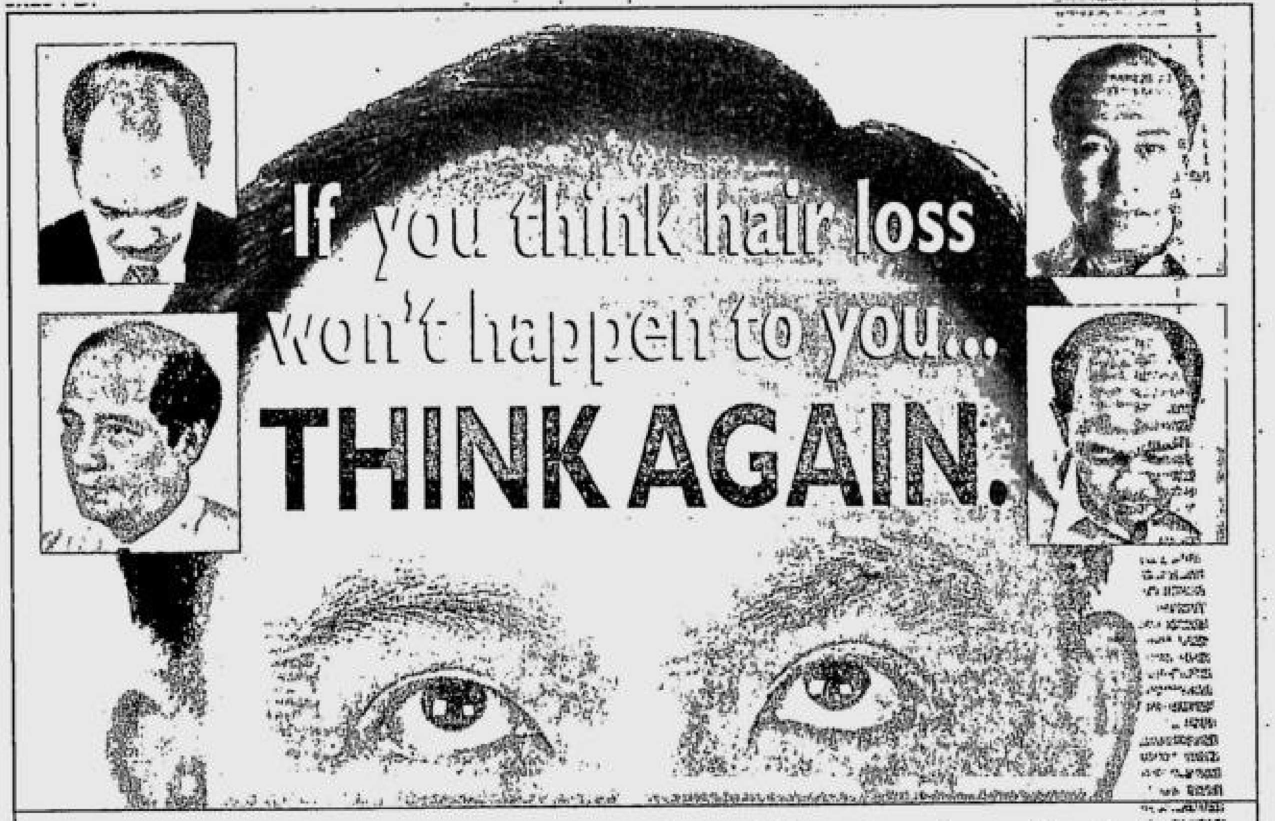
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Aboitiz Equity shelves capital spending, to cut debts instead

By Doris C. Dumlao

ABOITIZ Equity Ventures Inc. (AEV) is planning to trim its debts by P2 billion from P6 billion this year instead of shelling out more money to cover its capital expenditures.

AEV executive vice president and chief operating officer Erramon Aboitiz told reporters the P2 billion represented the conglomerate's estimated cash flow this year without any capital outlays.

"I think we'll be able to retire P2 billion this year," Aboitiz said.

"Frankly, (for) our capex this year, unless there are opportunities (for acquisition), we have nothing planned," he said.

He said AEV had already spent close to P4.5 billion last year for new acquisitions, most of which were financed through long-term loans.

Aboitiz also explained that each of AEV's subsidiaries had their own capital expenditure program without need of infusion from their parent firm.

He said shipping unit William Gothong & Aboitiz Inc., soon to be renamed Aboitiz Transport Group Inc., had, for instance, already acquired two new Super Ferries.

For its part, AEV last year bought out the interests held by the Gothong and Chiongbian families in WG&A and other minority interests for about P4 billion. It also bought out its partners in a unit of Pilmico Foods Corp. for P350 million.

"This year, our game plan is to consolidate, start bringing in the cash flow to reduce our debts," Aboitiz said.

"We have unavailed long-term loans, so we can avail and pay off our short term loans," he said.

Aboitiz also noted that AEV would not expect to replicate the extraordinary performance it posted last year.

Meralco unaudited net down 65%-70%

THE MANILA Electric Co., the country's biggest electricity distributor, said yesterday it expected its net profit for 2002 to reflect a 65- to 70-percent year-on-year drop based on unaudited figures.

The company did not provide other data, but it reported a net income of P1.48 billion pesos in 2001.

Meralco confirmed an earlier report that quoted company senior vice president Daniel Tagaza as saying a 0.3-percent growth in sales in the fourth quarter was not enough to pull up the firm's earnings.

The company also blamed the delay in the Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of its rate hike petition for its poor earnings performance.

Meralco slid 10 centavos or 1.09 percent, to P9.10, and its unrestricted B shares lost 50 centavos, or 3.85 percent, to P12.50. *Reuters*

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STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of DECEMBER 17, 2002

ASSETS

Cash and Cash Items		₱ 1,574,665,422
Due from Bangko Sentral		2,188,775,558
Due from Other Banks		1,660,814,063
Interbank Loans Receivable		4,659,825,009
Trading Accounts Securities (Net)		13,763,546,623
Investments in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		35,649,576,782
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		34,827,543,408
Equity Investments (Net)		177,421,826
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		2,978,661,808
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		4,448,448,529
Others		4,389,742,106
TOTAL ASSETS		₱106,319,021,134

LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS

LIABILITIES

Demand Deposits		₱ 9,294,536,069
Savings Deposits		40,785,475,424
Time Deposits		30,935,253,591
Special/Other Deposits		96,901,930
Due to Bangko Sentral		26,941,194
Due to Banks		1,660,291
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		223,417,303
Bills Payable		5,154,949,002
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		729,033,971
Other Liabilities		3,922,051,334
TOTAL LIABILITIES		₱91,170,220,109
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock		₱ 3,209,289,026
Surplus		9,809,784,886
Surplus Reserves		271,708,478
Other Capital Accounts		1,858,018,635
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		₱ 15,148,801,025
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		₱106,319,021,134

CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS

Unused Commercial Letters of Credit		₱ 1,964,425,341
Bills for Collection		199,233,041
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		0
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		10,527,077,936
Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements		24,528,232,724
Invested in:		
Government Securities	₱12,834,183,080	
Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stock	1,544,601,349	
Loans and Discounts	1,489,038,341	
Other Assets	8,660,409,953	
Accountabilities:		
Trust and Other Fiduciary	21,496,540,711	
Common Trust Funds	765,143,155	
Investment/Fund Management	2,424,447,648	
Unearned Income & Other Accountabilities	(157,898,790)	
Other contingent accounts		2,175,058,516
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		₱ 39,394,027,558

OTHER INFORMATION:

1. Deposits of:		
A) Government		₱ 146,648,438
B) Banks		183,963,948
C) Trust department		11,956,541
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law:		
Prescribed Ratio of Compliance	*6% For Small Ent.*	*2% For Medium Ent.*
Actual Compliance	192%	637%
3. Amount of non-performing loans		6,662,020,074
4. Ratio of non-performing loans to total loan portfolio		12.65%
5. Amount of classified loans and other risk assets		13,991,789,543
6. General provision for loan losses		1,513,735,558
7. Specific provision for loan losses		3,178,523,809
8. Return on Equity		22.49%
9 DOSRI loans/advances		2,497,557,398
10 Ratio to total loan portfolio		5.48%
11. Past due DOSRI loans/advances		19,436,895
12. Ratio to total loan portfolio		0.04%

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES } S. S.
CITY OF MAKATI

We, RICARDO R. CHUA and PETER S. DEE, of the above mentioned Bank, do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) RICARDO R. CHUA
Executive Vice President &
Chief Operating Officer

(Sgd.) PETER S. DEE
President &
Chief Executive Officer

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME this Jan. 20, 2003, affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 02077204 issued at Makati on January 11, 2002 and Residence Certificate No. 17405804 issued at Manila on February 21, 2002, respectively

Doc. No. 57
Page No. 13
Book No. 13
Series of 2002

(Sgd.) NOLAN C. CASIDING
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2003
PTR No. 7625265 Makati 1-8-03
TIN 125-400-632

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Bank and Financial Subsidiaries)
As of DECEMBER 17, 2002

ASSETS

Cash and Cash Items		₱ 1,575,471,788
Due from Bangko Sentral		2,188,775,558
Due from Other Banks		1,660,814,063
Interbank Loans Receivable		4,659,825,009
Trading Accounts Securities (Net)		13,763,546,623
Investments in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		35,730,821,224
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		34,827,543,408
Equity Investments (Net)		125,921,826
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		2,979,533,209
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		4,448,448,529
Others		4,419,977,907
TOTAL ASSETS		₱ 106,380,679,144

LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS

LIABILITIES

Demand Deposits		₱ 9,294,536,069
Savings Deposits		40,785,475,424
Time Deposits		30,935,253,591
Special/Other Deposits		96,901,930
Due to Bangko Sentral		26,941,194
Due to Banks		1,660,291
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		223,417,303
Bills Payable		5,154,949,002
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		757,497,113
Other Liabilities		3,955,248,202
TOTAL LIABILITIES		₱ 91,231,878,119
Minority Interest in Subsidiary		₱ 0
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock		₱ 3,209,289,026
Surplus		9,809,784,886
Surplus Reserves		271,708,478
Other Capital Accounts		1,858,018,635
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		₱ 15,148,801,025
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		₱ 106,380,679,144

CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS

Unused Commercial Letters of Credit		₱ 1,964,425,341
Bills for Collection		199,233,041
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		0
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		10,527,077,936
Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements		24,528,232,724
Invested in:		
Government Securities	₱12,834,183,080	
Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stock	1,544,601,349	
Loans and Discounts	1,489,038,341	
Other Assets	8,660,409,953	
Accountabilities:		
Trust and Other Fiduciary	21,496,540,711	
Common Trust Funds	765,143,155	
Investment/Fund Management	2,424,447,648	
Unearned Income & Other Accountabilities	(157,898,790)	
Other contingent accounts		2,175,058,516
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		₱ 39,394,027,558

OTHER INFORMATION:

1. Deposits of:	
A) Government	₱ 146,648,438
B) Banks	183,963,948
C) Trust Department	11,956,541

2. List of Bank's Financial Subsidiaries
A) CBC FOREX CORPORATION
B) CBC INSURANCE BROKERS, INC.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES } S. S.
CITY OF MAKATI

We, RICARDO R. CHUA and PETER S. DEE, of the above mentioned Bank, do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) RICARDO R. CHUA
Executive Vice President &
Chief Operating Officer

(Sgd.) PETER S. DEE
President &
Chief Executive Officer

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME this Jan. 20, 2003, affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 02077204 issued at Makati on January 11, 2002 and Residence Certificate No. 17405884 issued at Manila on February 21, 2002, respectively.

Doc. No. 56
Page No. 13
Book No. 13
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Notary Public
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Metro Q4 NPLs up 50%

By Elena R. Torrijos

METROPOLITAN Bank and Trust Co., the country's largest bank, saw the amount of bad loans in its portfolio jump nearly 50 percent to P31.48 billion in the fourth quarter of 2002 from P21.086 billion in the third quarter.

The bank's published statements of condition showed that Metrobank's non-performing loan ratio—its bad loans in relation to its total loan portfolio—rose to 15.27 percent as of Dec. 17 from 12.55 percent the quarter before.

Metrobank officials were sought for comment but had not returned calls as of press time.

Analysts have raised concern over the bank's non-performing loans, although the bank was able to raise its capital recently.

Last November, Metrobank raised $125 million in the international capital bond markets with a 10-year lower tier 2 bond issue.

The year before, the bank raised $100 million in tier 2 capital.

BPI bad loans at 10%

BANK of the Philippine Islands, the country's second biggest bank, said yesterday its non-performing loans ratio at the parent level stood at 10 percent as of Dec. 17 last year.

No. 3 Equitable PCI Bank, meanwhile, said its non-performing loans ratio at the parent level stood at 16.5 percent as of Dec. 17.

BPI reported that its total NPLs, as of Dec. 17, were P16 billion for those over 90 days past due.

It did not provide comparative figures.

In its own statement, Equitable said its total NPLs as of Dec. 17 were P25.07 billion.

It did not provide comparative figures. *Reuters*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Monday, January 20, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.5	17.75	17.5	17.75	21,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	37.5	38	37	37	496,400
Citystate Savings Bank	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	27	27	27	27	2,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31	30.5	31	141,600
Philippine National Bank	26	26	26	26	500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Filipino Fund, Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	20,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1245	1245	1245	1245	900
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1005	1020	1005	1015	660
Commercial & Industrial					
Communication					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14.25	14.25	14	14	16,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	2,800,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.015	0.016	0.015	0.016	3,000,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	5,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	300,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	320	322.5	317.5	320	114,390
Philweb Corp.	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.011	34,400,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A.	9.1	9.1	8.7	8.8	249,000
Manila Electric Co. B.	12.75	13	12.25	12.5	719,500
Petron Corp.	1.62	1.66	1.62	1.66	5,840,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	660,000
Transportation Services					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.6	1.66	1.6	1.66	360,000
Int'l Container Term'l SV	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	1,448,000
Keppel Phils. Marine, Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	4,620,000
William,Gothong & Aboitiz	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	6,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	0.47	0.47	0.46	0.46	170,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.16	2.16	2.14	2.14	76,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	-	-	-	-	-
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17.25	17.25	17	17.25	109,200
La Tondena Distillers,Inc.	35.5	35.5	35.5	35.5	3,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	57.5	57	57.5	23,900
San Miguel Corp. B	63.5	63.5	62.5	63	777,700
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.45	1,041,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.32	2.32	2.32	2.32	227,000
APC Group Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	100,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	5,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	150,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.15	0.15	1,460,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	900,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	9.9	9.9	9.6	9.6	246,000
Ionics Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.72	0.72	700,000
J.G. Summit Holdings, Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	199,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.61	0.61	0.6	0.6	810,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.175	0.175	0.17	0.17	600,000
Music Corp.	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	500,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	80,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	10,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	10,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	10,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.28	1,030,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	1,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	162,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	54,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	100,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12.25	12.5	12.25	12.25	51,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	760,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.26	0.26	200,000
Mondragon Intl Phils, Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	200,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(PDR)	14	14	14	14	25,000
Jollibee Warrants	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	91,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb Corp. - Warrants	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	1,000,000
WGA - Preferred	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	20,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7.2	7.8	7.2	7.8	4,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.2	5.2	5	5	752,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.135	0.14	0.135	0.14	1,070,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	800,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.94	1.94	100,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	5,000,000
Sm Development Corp.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	80,000
Sm Prime Holdings Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.2	870,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	70,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	200,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.245	0.245	0.245	0.245	10,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	2,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	530,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	800,000
Oil					
Imperial Res.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	1,000,000
Pacifica	0.0065	0.0085	0.0065	0.0085	3,000,000

DISCLOSURES

INTERPHIL Laboratories Inc. bought 1,000 of its own shares at P1.90 per share.

***

ABOITIZ Equity Ventures Inc. clarified that until the terms and conditions governing the sale of subtransmission assets of National Transmission Co. were finalized, no concrete action would be made by the company.

***

MANILA Electric Co. has clarified that the expected 70-percent drop in its 2002 profits was based on unaudited figures. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

Jan. 20, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.936593	1.000000	53.554000
Japan	Yen	0.007954	0.008493	0.454800
United Kingdom	Pound	1.511380	1.613700	86.420100
Hongkong	Dollar	0.120095	0.128225	6.867000
Switzerland	Franc	0.684543	0.730887	39.141900
Canada	Dollar	0.610118	0.651423	34.886300
Singapore	Dollar	0.540664	0.577267	30.915000
Australia	Dollar	0.553444	0.590912	31.645700
Bahrain	Dinar	2.484396	2.652590	142.056800
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.249752	0.266660	14.280700
Brunei	Dollar	0.539108	0.575606	30.826000
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000106	0.000113	0.006100
Thailand	Baht	0.021934	0.023419	1.254200
UAE	Dirham	0.255000	0.272264	14.580800
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.067700	57.179600
Argentina	Peso	0.289967	0.309598	16.580200
Brazil	Real	0.277427	0.296209	15.863200
Denmark	Kroner	0.134421	0.143521	7.686100
India	Rupee	0.019569	0.020894	1.119000
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.246505	0.263193	14.095000
Mexico	New Peso	0.088316	0.094295	5.049900
New Zealand	Dollar	0.516058	0.550995	29.508000
Norway	Kroner	0.137191	0.146479	7.844500
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016162	0.017256	0.924100
South Africa	Rand	0.106431	0.113636	6.085700
Korea	Won	0.000798	0.000852	0.045600
Sweden	Kroner	0.108822	0.116189	6.222400
Syria	Pound	0.018186	0.019417	1.039900
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.027290	0.029138	1.560500
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000527	0.000563	0.030200

RP bonds remain . . .

From page B1

of a raft of tax reform measures and a crackdown on evaders.

Hasenstab said he was confident the reforms would work and the country's financial team would manage the fiscal problems.

He also said a current account surplus would continue to keep foreign investors interested in Philippines, despite the sizeable revisions to surpluses in 2000 and 2001.

Last week, the Philippines revised its current account data after finding it had understated imports. The 2000 surplus was revised down to $5.87 billion from $9.19 billion while the surplus in 2001 was lowered to $305 million from $4.025 billion.

"The positive side of that was the government aggressively restated what the number should be and didn't try to hide it," Hasenstab said, adding while the revision did cause some price volatility, the benchmark 2025 issue was still trading at par.

Hasenstab said while emerging Europe outperformed Asia in terms of returns last year, Templeton would continue to be overweight in Asia given the region's better ratings profile.

Returns from Asian bond funds were around 15 percent in 2002, compared to over 20 percent for emerging Europe, he said. *Reuters*

Iraq war fears grip US economy

WASHINGTON—A cloud of uncertainty from the prospect of a US war with Iraq is casting a dark shadow on the world's richest economy, which entered the new year with a worrying lack of momentum, economists say.

Relentlessly weak data released in the past few weeks are making what the Federal Reserve last year dubbed a "soft patch" look potentially more ominous and lasting.

"I think the prospect of a war in the Middle East is exerting a very big drag on things," said Doug Lee, who heads the consulting firm Economics from Washington.

Lee and other economists said questions over how a war might unfold and the impact it could have on the US economy—either through higher oil prices or lower consumer confidence or both—was hurting growth.

Throw in the loss of around $7 trillion in stock market wealth, mix with shrinking payrolls, and economists say you have a dismal brew that raises the chances an already sluggish economy could slow further.

Economic growth braked sharply as it moved from the third quarter of last year into the fourth and it appears to have lost more impetus in the waning weeks of the year.

US employers cut 101,000 workers from their payrolls in December and industrial production fell as well. Incentives from carmakers gave a boost to retail sales last month, but without autos, the key holiday shopping season looked grim.

Consumers' moods have also darkened. A survey out Friday from the University of Michigan showed consumer sentiment soured in early January as concerns over the future mounted.

Still, many analysts argue that with a quick end to the US-Iraq showdown and little American blood shed, the economy will pick up steam in the second half of the year.

"Overall, the economy does not appear to be at risk of falling into recession," Reaser said. "If we were to resolve the Iraqi situation overnight . . . the markets and the economy probably would rebound quite significantly."

Reuters

Bank of Japan seen leaving key policies unchanged

TOKYO—The Bank of Japan is likely to leave monetary policy unchanged this week despite political pressure on it to take radical steps to halt deflation and breathe some life into the moribund economy.

A two-day meeting of its policy board starting on Tuesday has triggered a raft of comments from political and business figures on what they think the bank should do, but analysts doubt that the more radical voices will be heeded this week.

"There's a lot being said in the outer field. But the economy hasn't deteriorated over the past few months, so I don't think there's a reason for them to act now," said Mamoru Yamazaki, chief economist at Barclays Capital.

High on the list of recommended radical measures is inflation-targeting—setting a target for prices to rise and adopting policies to achieve it. This could involve buying stocks or even property to generate liquidity.

In a weekend interview in the Asahi newspaper, former BOJ policy board member Nobuyuki Nakahara, said to be in the running to take over as BOJ governor in March, restated his view that an inflation target should be adopted.

Inflation-targeting has supporters in government, including Finance and Economics Minister Heizo Takenaka, but it is controversial and debate rages over how effective it might be.

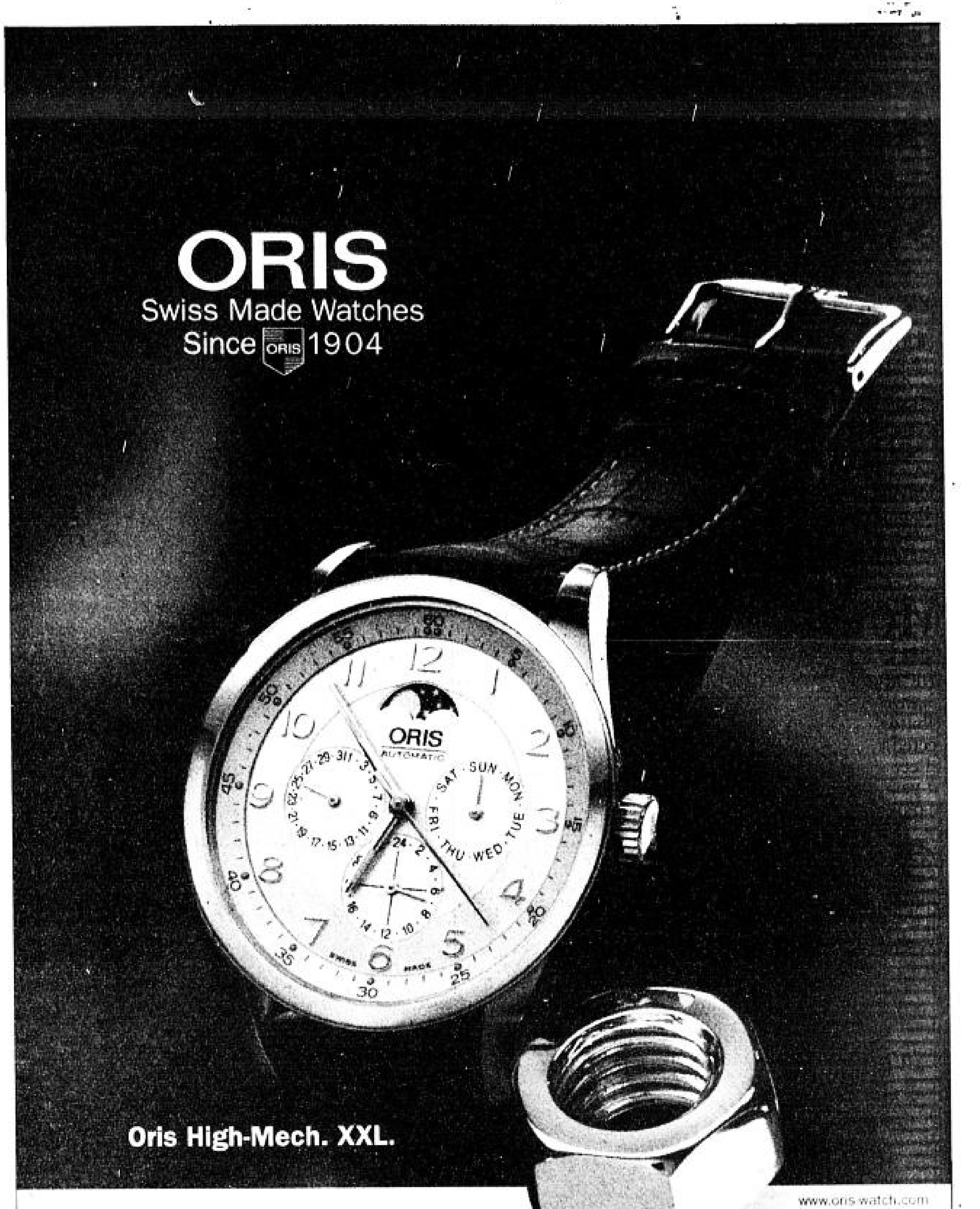
Reuters

Asia PC sales up

HONG KONG—Personal computer shipments in Asia, excluding Japan, rose 15 percent in the 4th quarter of 2002 from the same period the previous year with most countries in the region posting solid growth except South Korea.

PC makers shipped a total of 6.8 million units in the 4th quarter, according to research group IDC.

Reuters



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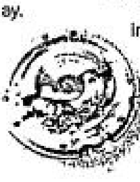

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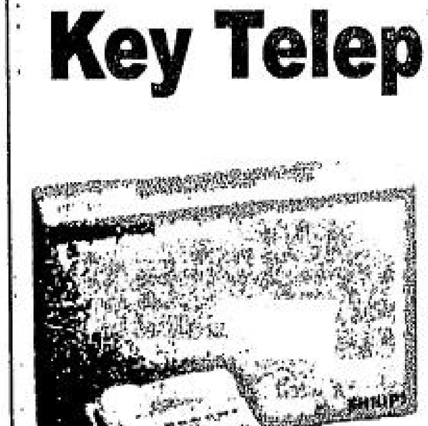
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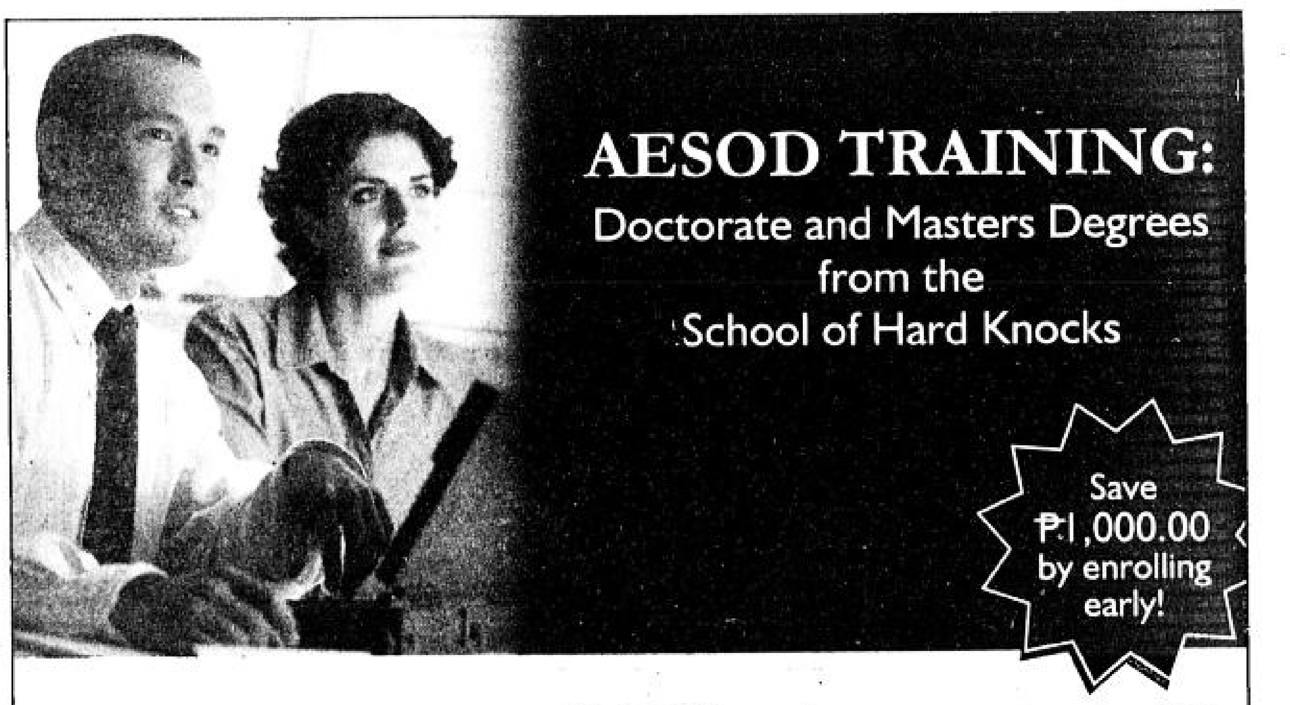
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Johnnie Walker: The Journey of Taste reveals the intricacies of Johnnie Walker Pure Malt

THE PERFECTLY smooth, rich blend of Johnnie Walker Pure Malt is something that only a select few are blissfully acquainted with. Many are not familiar with the world famous whisky's even richer history, its recipe and all the work that goes into making it the masterpiece of a blend that it really is. Of course, nothing can be done about making this golden ambrosia's recipe known to us mortals – the best things in life are the best kept secret, after all – but we can count on Johnnie Walker: The Journey of Taste, an exclusive, interactive familiarization session held recently for its friends in media at The Prince Bar and Restaurant in Greenbelt, for a glimpse (and taste) into the things that make Johnnie Walker Pure Malt the world's best malt whisky.

With his enthusiasm, wit and a few bottles from the distilleries of Johnnie Walker as ammunition, Johnnie Walker Brand Ambassador Karl MacLean has been spreading the good word about Johnnie Walker Pure Malt.

He explained to an audience of distinguished media personalities how Johnnie Walker Pure Malt is the product of the unique blending of choice Highland Malts from distilleries all over the Scottish landscape.

Throughout the Journey of Taste, the fascinated audience was rewarded the supreme pleasure of experiencing some of the different blends that give Johnnie Walker Pure Malt its many faceted aroma and depth of flavor.

In each destination in the Journey of Taste, MacLean allowed his eager listeners to nose – that is to smell – the whisky, and finally, to taste it and determine each one's difference. At no point in the journey is his audience more agog than when he finally asks them to sample the piece de resistance, Johnnie Walker Pure Malt itself.

The prominent media personages at the Journey of Taste made for an unforgettable evening overflowing with wit and whisky. With each Journey of Taste, Johnnie Walker hopes to inspire more men to appreciate the unassailable taste and quality of Johnnie Walker Pure Malt, and the prestigious image it stands for.

COLUMNIST Donnie Ramirez wins a bottle of Johnnie Walker Pure Malt in the raffle.

INQUIRER publisher Isagani Yambot checks out Johnnie Walker's legs.

GUESTS had exclusive privilege of tasting the different blends that make up Johnnie Walker's premium quality flavor.

INQUIRING minds – Inquirer advertising manager Kenny Nuyda (left) and publisher Isagani Yambot learn about Johnnie Walker's rich history from Johnnie Walker brand ambassador Karl MacLean and a Lady of the Striding Man.

PIZZA HUT PETRON-NORTH WINS AWARD

Pizza Hut Petron-North was recently adjudged as the cleanest Pizza Hut restaurant in the Philippines thus, winning the Clean-Across-Asia award. Randy Valenzuela, Pizza Hut Petron-North manager, and Cita Zuniga, area manager restaurant-based division in the lower north, accepted the trophy. Congratulating them were (from left) Lars Peterson, chief operating officer of Philippine Pizza Inc., the owner and operator of the Pizza Hut franchise in the Philippines; Art Rautio, managing director of Yum! Restaurants International (Asia Franchise Region); Pizza Hut endorser Diether Ocampo; TV host and celebrity Kris Aquino; and Rose Herrera, VP for operations. Pizza Hut is the world's largest and most recognized pizza chain with more than 8,000 restaurants in the US alone and over 4,000 branches in more than 90 countries. In the Philippines, Pizza Hut has more than 100 restaurants nationwide and is known for its adherence to high standards of quality in the areas of product development; service operations established by Pizza Hut's system worldwide which makes customers keep coming back for more.

MS AND MR CEU 2003 PROCLAIMED

Karen Anne S. Cad, a 19-year old Accounting sophomore from CEU's School of Accountancy, Business, Secretarial, and Public Administration, and Hermann Gerhard Weber, an 18-year old Nursing freshman, were proclaimed Ms and Mr CEU 2003 last Jan. 13 in glittering coronation rites at the CEU north quadrangle. The two bested 18 other candidates who vied for the title. Photo shows (from left): Oscar de Guzman, Mr CEU 1st runner-up from the School of Education, Liberal Arts, Music, and Social Work; Jonah Grace Maluto, Ms CEU 1st runner-up representing the University Student Council; Ms CEU Karen S. Cad, from the school of Accountancy, Business, Secretarial and Public Administration. Mr CEU Hermann Gerhard Weber representing the University Student Council; Maria Kristine B. Jensen, Ms CEU 2nd runner-up from the School of Tourism, Family Economics and Nutrition; Osmond A. Rollo, Mr CEU 2nd runner-up representing the Junior Philippine Computer Society.

GRAND REUNION 2002

ATENEO DE DAVAO HIGH SCHOOL 65' GRAND REUNION

The Ateneo de Davao 65' high school batch 65' recently held their Grand Reunion at Garden Paradise Island. After 37 years, about 80 former classmates from the Ateneo de Davao got together for 3 days and nights of camaraderie and fun. The 65ers most importantly honored their departed classmates. Former classmates, Nick Solana (a resistant of the Martial Rule era) was declared by the Ateneo de Manila as one of their heroes. The 65ers Foundation was further strengthened be the infusion of donations from the members to grant scholarships to deserving students of the Ateneo.

P14 million nursing scholarship program application extended

Rymek Enterprises Inc., a healthcare personnel specialist based in New Jersey, USA, is extending the deadline for the submission of application for its multi-million peso "Nursing Students Dream USA Program" until Jan. 31. This is to accommodate more students and give them time to process the necessary requirements.

According to Nolan Pidor, president of Rymek, this program aims to help Filipino nurses achieve their American dream. "Rymek will take care of everything from the free nursing board exam and review fees up to taking the CGFNS, TOEFL, TSE and immigration processes."

Rymek will be spending P7,000 per nurse (P500 for the Philippine Nursing Board exam and P6,500 for the review class). That's P14 million for 2,000 nurses. "This is just for the first stage of the whole program. Rymek will be sponsoring the nurses until they finish all the required exams and process their application for immigration," said Pidor.

The evaluation and classification for the "Nursing Students Dream USA Program" will be based on the nurses' academic achievements and leadership qualities. The 2,000 nurses who will qualify must take the Philippine Nursing Board Exam in May and Dec. 2003.

Once chosen for the program, candidates can then expect to avail of a special US placement package which Rymek offers to foreign nurses: (1) free CGFNS and NCLEX application fees; (2) free review classes for CGFNS/NCLEX; (3) all expense-paid 3-day-2-night package to Saipan for the NCLEX exam (including plane fare from the Philippines to Saipan, airport transfers in Saipan, hotel accommodations, free breakfasts; (4) free TOEFL and TSE application fees; (5) free review classes for TSE; (6) free Visa Screen application fee.

When candidates pass the CGFNS or the NCLEX, they will be sponsored for the I-140 (immigrant) visa petition by the sponsoring facility. This includes: (1) free visa petition application fee; (2) free legal fees; (3) free visa fee.

Other benefits of the placement package: (1) choice of assignment among 35 states all over the US; (2) choice between hospital and long term care facility; (3) free plane fare from the Philippines to the US; (4) three months free housing upon arrival. Immediate family members can be included in the petition.

Chosen candidates must take the Philippine Nursing Board exam scheduled in May or Dec. Interested parties must submit the following: (1) certified copy of transcript of records; (2) comprehensive resume; (3) letter from school registrar certifying to the applicants class ranking (if available); and (4) a one-page, handwritten essay on the following topic: "Why I Chose Rymek's Nursing Student's Dream USA Program." Successful applicants are required to sign a commitment letter for US placement with Rymek. Send all applications to any of the three Rymek offices in the Philippines: Program Coordinator, Rymek Enterprises Inc. 1633 Adriatico St. Unit #16, Ermita, Metro Manila (Back of Rothman Hotel); or PNA Bldg., 1st Lacson St. Bacolod City Tel. No. (034) 434-7408; or 2nd floor, Asic Bldg., 369 Bonifacio St. Davao City; or email to info@rymek.com. Deadline for submission is Jan. 31. All entries must be postmarked not later than Jan. 31 in order to qualify for the program. For more information, visit Rymek's website: www.rymek.com.

Soprano to hold classes and a concert

U.P. MUSIC alumna Evelyn Mandac, soprano, BM 1963 will be featured in a homecoming concert with Prof. Regalado Jose as the collaborating artist on Thursday 6 p.m. Jan. 23 at the Abelardo Hall Auditorium. She will be conducting masterclasses in vocal performance and voice literature from Jan. 26 to Feb. 7 at the U.P. College of Music. For inquiries, call 929-6963 or 920-5301 local 40531 and look for Yvette.

Ms. Mandac holds a masters degree in voice from Juilliard School of Music and is currently teaching vocal technique and music interpretation in a private studio in New York City. She has won prizes in the Metropolitan Opera Auditions, the Queen Elizabeth Voice Competition in Belgium, Jeunesses Musicale in Manila, and was chosen as one of the Ten Most Outstanding Students in the Philippines. She has performed with major opera companies in Europe and the United States, with conductors Levine, Karajan, Ozawa, Abbado, Ormandy, Meheta and others. She has performed with Placido Domingo, M. Horne, S. Milnes, B. Nilsson, J. Toureal, R. Tucker, K, Te Kanawa and others. Her recordings include Mahler's Second Symphony, Philadelphia orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy, Meyerrrrrbeer L' Africaine, San Francisco Opera with Placido Domingo and Shirley Verrett Orff's Carmina Burana, Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Rotary Club of Makati-Legazpi

RC MAKATI-LEGAZPI MEDICAL MISSION

Hundreds of indigent children of Barangay Olympia of Makati City and its adjoining barangays were recently provided with medical attention by top Filipino medical specialists Dr. Glenn Garcia (3rd from left) and Dr. Jose Mario Pablo (3rd from right), as they held clinic at the ground floor of the Nicanor C. Garcia Elementary School. Also shown are (from left) District 3830 assistant governor and former president of RC Makati-Legazpi Patria 'Patty' Chiong, director Ted Polinga, director Mon Sanchez, consultant to the City Mayor, vice-president/president-elect Elda Dizon, charter secretary and former president Cesar D. Castro, president and principal Consultant of CD Castro Consultancy Inc., Nicanor C. Garcia Elementary School principal Pricilla M. Tanliaco, and RC Makati-Legazpi president Rodd Poitan. The Rotary Club of Makati-Legazpi is now one of the strongest among the many Makati-based Rotary clubs. RC Makati-Legazpi was chartered under the Rotary International in 1989 as the 11th Rotary club in Makati City.

RITM holds its 4th Postgraduate Course

THE RESEARCH Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) is pleased to announce that it is holding its 4th Postgraduate Course this coming March 26 to 28 at the RITM auditorium, RITM compound, Filinvest Corporate City Alabang Muntinlupa City. This year's theme is "Tracking New Trends in Infectious and Tropical Disease". The two-day course consists of lectures in the mornings to be followed by workshop, skill building and hands-on laboratory training in the afternoons. The faculty composed of the country's known and experienced infectious disease specialists, researchers and scientists, Pre-registration fee (on or before Feb. 15) is P800. On site registration is P1,000. Dormitory rooms will be available for provincial participants. For inquiries please call (632) 8072628-32 local 801, 611 or 235 or email mbongcales@ritm.gov.ph.

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Ayala Avenue 2,400 sqm. Paseo de Roxas 8,285 sqm.; Ayala North/ Salcedo Valero 5,125 sqm. Gil Puyat Rear Dela Costa 3,201 sqm.; Chino Roces (Pasong Tamo) 8,200 sqm. 935 sqm.; N.Garcia (Reposo) 320 sqm. Galleria de Magallanes 3 BDR/3TB, 2 Parking Slot Legaspi Village Condos FA 150; 114 sqm. Salcedo Village Condos FA 195; 224; 180 sqm. Condo Sen Gil Puyat FA 187 sqm.; Legaspi Village Rada FCC Bldg. Beside Union Church 1/F Three (3) Office Condos GFA/sqm. 48.33; 35.50; 46.00 Leaseback Optional to Buyer Warranted 10% Net Return Yr. Legaspi Village FA; 623 sqm. Salcedo Village Condos FA: 64; G/F 342 sqm.

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Ortigas Center. San Miguel Ave. 10,509 sqm. Nr. SMC HQ; Shaw Blvd. cor.529m2

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late TEODORO L. ESPIRITU who died on July 23, 2002 has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs per Doc. No. 488, Page No. 90, Book No. II, Series of 2002 dated Dec. 18, 2002 of Notary Public Ruderico B. Tullo of Davao City.
(PDI-Jan. 14, 21 & 28, 2003)

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CATALINO PEREZ ARAFILES, SR.

DIRECTOR, NIAGAS, PAGASA, 1977–1989
NATIONAL SCIENTIST, 1987

Died in Tamag, Vigan, Ilocos Sur at the age of 78.

His wife **Consuelo C. Pasion**; children **Virgilio** and **France**, **Ruben & Naia**, **Mildred** and **Jesse P. Reyes**, **Catalino Jr.** and **Ludy**, **Dennis** and **Kelly**; grandchildren **Angel**, **Victor**, **Rebecca**, **Ruben Jr.** (†), **Jimuelle**, **Jileny**, **Claribell** and **Clarissa**, request for your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

He lies in state at Fr. G. Willmann, S. J. Suite, Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque City.

Interment will be at the Loyola Memorial Park on Saturday, 25 January 2003 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels.

CARLOS MENDOZA GARCIA

passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on January 18, 2003 at the age of 74.

His loving wife, **Zeny Bunag**,

Children	Grandchildren
Ral & Patty Arrogante	**Liam, Franco and Raphaella**
Louie & Myrna Garcia (†)	**Louella, Luisito**
Juju & Joy Garcia	**Nikki, Miggy (†), Juddle**
Bernadette	
Ria & Louie Papina	**Luigi**
Celeste Nove	
Carlos Dominador	

Sister **Lydia Garcia-Tison**, brother **Sonny**, in-laws, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington East The Garden Chapels, Capilla E, C. Raymundo Ave., Cor. Mercedes Ave., San Miguel Ave., Pasig City.

Interment will be on January 22, 2003, Wednesday, after the 9:30 a.m. Mass which will be held at the Heritage Memorial Park, Fort Bonifacio, Lower Bicutan.

JUSTO R. BUENAVENTURA

Peacefully joined our Lord on January 18, 2003
at the age of 80.

His loving wife **Aurora Pascua**; children **Rene & Tett**, **Raul & Geannie**, **Manny**, **Archie & Mae**, **Millie**; grandchildren, brothers, sisters & friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Cremation will take place today, January 21, 2003 at the Manila Memorial Crematorium in Sucat, Parañaque after the 8:30 a.m. Mass at the St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Church, Magallanes Village, Makati City.

"My soul, be at rest in God alone from whom comes my hope".
Psalm 62:6

"A rare and great light has gone out, but one that has made all others shine brighter."

Antonio Boban Yu

November 21, 1927 - January 17, 2003

Beloved husband to ROSARIO CHAM YU; father to ADRIAN & TESS, BRENDAN & MARGARET, CHARLEMAGNE & MERIAM, DEXTER & JESSICA, ELAINE, FERDINAND, GIOVANNI & ALMA; grandfather to HARVIN, IRVIN, JUSTIN, KYRA, LAUREN, MARTIN, NICCOLO, OLIVER, PHILIP and QUERVIN; friends to many, to all of whom he was an extraordinary inspiration. He shall be profoundly missed.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be at the Chinese Cemetery on Friday, January 24, 2003 at 10:00 a.m.

Our Dearest Tatay

ENGR. MARINO L. MATIG-A, P.E.E.

Peacefully joined his Creator
on January 19, 2003 at the age of 68.

His wife **Nalda**; loving children **Mareylou**, **Aloy & Mel**, **Bob & Anne Marie**, **Judei**, **Ding & Joy**; grandchildren **Adrian**, **Ryan & Niño**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Royal Chapel, Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels in Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Thursday, January 23, 2003 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Parañaque City.

Our Dearly Beloved

ROMEO TINIO VICENCIO

(widower of the late Rosalinda Cruz)
peacefully joined our Creator on January 20, 2003
at the age of 68.

His loving children Paolo and Cynthia, Catherine and Vlad, wife Marilou; grandchildren JC, Justin, John and Patricia; brothers and sisters, in-laws, nephews and nieces; and other relatives request fervent prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Nacional Memorial Homes. Interment is on Thursday, January 23, 2003 at Loyola Memorial Park Marikina after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

"The Lord
is my strength and my
shield in whom my heart
trusted and found help.
So my heart rejoices;
with my song I praise
my God."
Psalm 28:7

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PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY

PORT DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN LUZON
164 13th Street, Port Area, Manila
Tel. (02) 301-9576 to 79; Fax (02) 527-4790

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TO BID

All interested parties with capitalization of not less than P30,000,000.00 are invited to apply for pre-qualification and, if pre-qualified to bid for the

LEASE, CONSTRUCTION, MANAGEMENT, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PASSENGER TERMINAL FACILITY AT THE PORT OF CALAPAN, CALAPAN CITY, ORIENTAL MINDORO

Issuance of Bid Documents	January 29 - February 4, 2003
Pre-Bid Conference	February 28, 2003
Submission of Bid Documents	Not later than 2:00 PM, March 17, 2003
Opening of Qualification Documents	2:00 PM, March 17, 2003
Opening of Technical Proposals	10:00 AM, March 24, 2003
Opening of Financial Proposals	10:00 AM, March 31, 2003

Bid documents may be secured upon presentation of Letter of Intent and payment of non-refundable amount of P5,000.00 exclusive of VAT, at the Port District Office of Southern Luzon at the above address. The venue for all activities shall be at the Port District Office of Southern Luzon.

The Philippine Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part thereat, waive any defect of informality therein and to accept the bids most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) HECTOR E. MIOLE
Port District Manager

(PDI-Jan. 13, 21 & 28, 2003)

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES
LOS BAÑOS
College, Laguna

INVITATION TO BID

The University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) invites interested parties to submit sealed bids for the public bidding of **Steam Sterilizer** (Cabinet type) for the Institute of Biotechnology (Biotech) with approved budget of 2M.

Interested parties may secure bid documents and the checklist of the qualification requirements from Supply and Property Management Office (SPMO).

The schedule of the bidding activities is as follows:

Particulars	Date/Time	Place
Issuance of Bid Documents	Jan. 27-Feb. 3/ 8:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.	SPMO
Pre-Bid Conference	Feb. 7, 2003, Fri./10:00 a.m.	SPMO
Opening/submission of bids	Feb. 14, 2003, Fri./10:00 a.m.	SPMO

Bidders shall submit two (2) sealed envelopes containing a) TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS (e.g. qualification requirements indicated in the checklist, bid security as to form, amount and validity period, authority of signatory, after sales service/parts, catalogues/ brochures/other literatures, etc.); and b) FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS at the Supply and Property Management Office, UPLB.

The UPLB reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the UPLB. The UPLB likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) DR. TERESITA M. ESPINO
Chair, PBAC

(PDI – Jan. 14 & 21, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Procurement Service
INTER-AGENCY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PS)** invites G-EPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF COMBAT BOOTS for the Philippine Air Force.**

The approved budget for this contract is **P20,400,000.00.**

All interested parties are invited to attend the **Pre-Bid Conference** that will be held **on February 4, 2003, 9:30 A.M. at the PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila.**

The bid documents shall be available at the **PS-PURCHASING DIVISION** starting **January 21, 2003** upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Three Thousand Pesos (Php 3,000.00).**

The bidders shall submit their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes at the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above mentioned address. Deadline for submission and opening of bids shall be on **February 20, 2003 at 9:30 A.M.**

For more information, please call the **PS-Purchasing Division** at telephone nos. **563-94-02 or 563-93-74.**

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation, PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO P. OPIDA
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI – Jan. 21 & 28, 2003)

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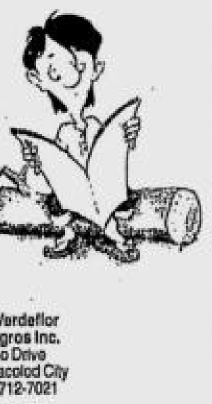

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Republic of the Philippines
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E-mail: *sssemail@info.com.ph* • Website: *http://www.sss.gov.ph*

Visit the SSS website for Bid Invitations

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID

SSS EMPLOYEES' RICE REQUIREMENT FOR THE 2ND QUARTER OF CY2003

The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM is inviting bidders for the supply and door-to-door delivery of approximately 7,500 sacks of Freshly Milled Premium Grade Commercial Rice for SSS employees for the second quarter of Year 2003 with the following specifications:

- Degree of Milling : Well Milled Rice (WMR)
- Moisture Content : 14% (maximum)
- Grade Specifications : Headrice - 90% to 95% (minimum)
  Broken - 10% to 5% (maximum)
- Packaging : 50 kilos in light yellow woven polyprophylene
- Labeling : With front & back markings
- Delivery Terms : Thirty (30) calendar days upon receipt of the Purchase Order (P.O.)

Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : P1,000.00 per sack per employee
Source of Funding : Capital Expenditures

Interested bidders must secure the Eligibility Requirements from the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat, 6th Floor, SSS Main Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Only eligible bidders shall be required to pay the non-refundable fee of P5,000.00 to cover the cost of the bidding documents. For any inquiry, please call telephone numbers 922-2991 or 920-6401 local 5490/5491. The deadline for the submission of eligibility documents is on **06 February 2003.**

The SSS reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the SSS. The SSS neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids nor does the SSS guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **MIGUEL F. ROCA, JR.**
Senior Vice President and Chairman
Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI--Jan. 21, 2003)

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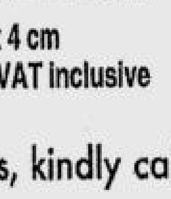

love,
Red

size: 1 col x 4 cm
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Valentine's like you, Trish, don't come along everyday. I love you. – Paul

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My heart beats for you and only for you, Tim. This Valentine's day, let's paint the town red – Mimi

size: 4 lines
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REALESTATE
Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

To buy or not to buy property

By Tessa R. Salazar

WOULD you want to add real estate to your list of business options? It is the start of the year, possibly a time to start new businesses. But how do you make sure you start things right and not on the wrong foot? How do you make sure a particular real property investment would, indeed, yield exceptional returns?

You know you have to consider several issues before plunging into real estate. But after everything is considered, you may have to realize that you still need lots of luck to emerge a winner in the property business.

Real estate pundits advise that risks differ from country to country. Market practices are unpredictable—the risk of making decisions based on insufficient information runs high. Little knowledge can lead to costly mistakes, and so does the wrong knowledge, for that matter.

The key, they say, is to understand the local real estate market and its practices to recognize local obstacles or opportunities, to consider the options for dealing with them, and to develop strategies to mitigate or exploit them as it relates to your business operations—either with local partners or reputable service providers.

And it doesn't matter on what side of the fence you sit on. You may be a developer, a speculator or a local investor; the key is the same for everyone in the property business. The INQUIRER recently asked real property consultant FPDSavills some of the issues investors need to consider before making the tough decisions.

- **Product availability.** Is the property you are eyeing for your ideal site actually for sale?

Majority of buildings in the Philippines are traded on a strata-title basis (sold unit by unit, floor by floor) and for most this would be the best option because of the lower lump sum involved compared with a whole block transaction.

FPDSavills research director Benedict Miranda noted that the Philippine market has relatively limited availability of single-owned quality building stock for sale, which greatly reduces the possibility of finding suitable premises. "Even in a market of rapidly falling values, many landlords will not be sufficiently distressed to dispose of prime assets. Your ideal building in your ideal location may only be available for lease," he said.

- **Length of business plan.** Your building needs to be maintained. It ages, sometimes faster than the others. New generations of office space come to the market representing even higher specifications. How long will you be in occupation and are you likely to require more from your offices in several years? What is the horizon of your business plan?

What are the potential returns from the property? Miranda said property exposure and opportunity cost should be weighed.

The cost of acquiring real estate in the Philippines should be weighed against the return from usual business operations to ensure an acceptable level of exposure. He stressed that potential returns from real estate should also be weighed against the opportunity cost of investing capital elsewhere.

- **Find the chinks in the armor.** Find out the defects and liabilities of the property you are about to own. With ownership come responsibilities. A prospective owner should be aware of these requirements and any associated liabilities.

"Expenses of a capital nature would have to be met (by the owner), and this requirement could result in considerable expenditure if any defects are found to be more than superficial," he said.

- **Access to finance.** Miranda said business levels would depend on that business' access to capital and the amount of equity participation. "Corporations with a high credit rating may, for instance, be able to obtain unsecured corporate debt at preferential terms, making ownership attractive."

Then, for overseas-based companies whose revenue is denominated in a currency other than US dollars, the risk of devaluation may be unacceptable. "There is the possibility of quantifying the risk and adjusting required returns accordingly, although this is unlikely," he countered.

- **Taxes.** Taxation of real estate holdings and income varies from one country to another. Taxes such as annual property tax, ordinary income tax, capital gains tax, transfer tax and value added tax "sometimes pose as a barrier and should be carefully considered when structuring any real estate investment in a jurisdiction that imposes these taxes," Miranda said.

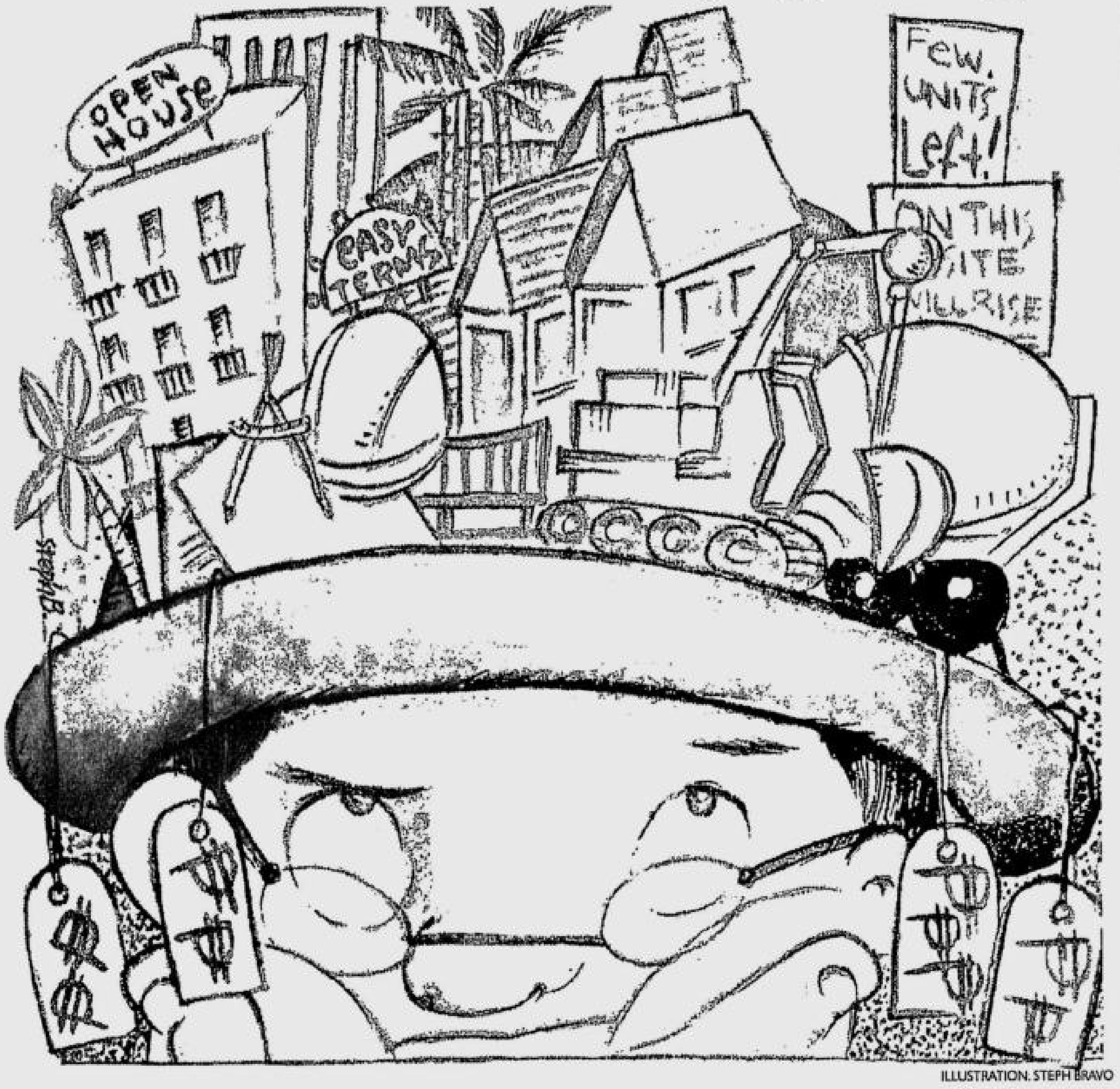

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Inside design and construction of homes

By Alexis A. Acacio, Ph.D.
(Second of two parts)

BUILDING DREAMS

IN LAST week's article, the house design process was briefly discussed. This week's article aims to give an insight about house construction. Getting the services of a knowledgeable and trustworthy contractor or builder may be the best way to build your home. It is a lot more advantageous in terms of time, money, effort and quality of work.

Difficult to build alone

A house cannot be built overnight, figuratively, needless to say. Nor can it be designed in a single sitting. Design professionals help convert your ideas into a buildable plan. You can provide materials and equipment for it and "manage" its construction but without the background and experience, the finished product most probably will be uneconomical, of low quality and worst of all, unsafe.

House design is not as simple as it looks. Much more complicated is its construction. Many would think that putting in a huge number of steel reinforcing bars in concrete would help strengthen it. And how much more accurate can someone, without enough knowledge in design, determine the amount of pressure and load that the structure will get over its lifetime (which is, everyone would prefer, a very long time)? A builder can help you solve your problems.

Headaches of building alone

After the design of your home is finished, the task of building it has to be faced. Are you capable of managing the order of a hundred materials a week? Will you be able to handle the management of different people at the construction site? Will you be preparing enough money to rent, or buy equipment that you will no longer need after construction?

Your answer to these questions is probably "No." Unless you're an experienced designer or builder, and you have a lot of time and resources, then building on your own is not your best option. If you're building yourself, then you will have to prepare for all of these and a whole lot more.

Professional homebuilders and contractors provide you with solutions to all these problems. First of all, engineers, contractors and architects employ their knowledge, skills and experience in managing the construction of your house.

FORMS and scaffolds

EQUIPMENT

CONSTRUCTION services

Management skills

Expenses in constructing a house include materials, labor, tools and equipment, formworks, scaffoldings and permits. All of these should be managed efficiently and to save as much resources as possible, and experienced construction project managers do this very well. They handle this type of work almost every day and they know what to do, when to do it and how to do it.

Because of regular purchase of materials they need for numerous projects, contractors usually get volume discounts from suppliers when they order. They have a pool of trusted suppliers and get items at a much lower cost than for one-time buyers. Orders are quickly made without the need of canvassing for low prices, and idle time due to this is eliminated and used for other important matters. If you are buying materials for a single house thinking that you will be able to get the best price because of your negotiation skills, you may be wrong. Suppliers will not give you the discounts that they give to their big-volume and long-term buyers.

Manpower is another advantage for a construction company because it has regular groups of workers working for the company. Familiarity with their people gives these companies the upper hand than those who build single projects. I have seen a lot of owners hiring the construction crew to build their home and ended up with a project that was delayed, of low quality and over budget. They also ended up stressed.

Tools and equipment

Tools and equipment, formworks and scaffoldings are either bought or rented. If you would not ask for construction services, you will have to plan the purchases and rentals of these keeping in mind that in case you buy, it will not be useful after your house is complete.

Regular builders usually have tools and equipment for their use in many of their projects. They provide for the initial cost, use it over and over for many years, and the only other expense on their part is the maintenance. Some use steel scaffolds and forms so they can use it for a much longer time than wooden ones, which you will probably use if you will build yourself. Rental of equipment is charged on per day or on an hourly basis, and the cost can pile up quickly if the project is not scheduled properly.

Getting documents, financing

Some homebuilders even provide its customers with assistance to all other matters pertaining to the construction of your house such as permits and financing. This way, you will not have to worry too much about the necessary documents for construction.

Also look for builders that give quality after-sales service to do repairs and one that can answer any house-related question you might have.

Availing of construction services

Aside from the costs, many other factors make hiring contractors and homebuilders highly advantageous. First of all, the standardized and systematic approach to their projects is always being improved to increase their efficiency and accuracy, which will significantly reduce your expenses in the long run, as well as the project's duration.

Their experience in construction gives them the ability to identify, respond to, and solve many problems that are present in construction projects readily. Problems arise in construction very frequently and without enough experience, you will definitely have a difficult time dealing with it. Wastage is also minimized through proper handling and usage of construction materials.

The only problem left for you is to choose the correct builder. It is recommended that you choose one that can suit all your needs and who is trusted to do all its work well. Look at the builder's past projects and ask to see some of these. Better yet, ask past clients of the builder that you are considering:

- Was the relationship well?
- Was the project completed on schedule and within budget? Remember that a house is one of the biggest investments you will ever make so you should plan your steps before taking them. Just make sure everything counts and the rewards will be satisfying.

(Alexis A. Acacio is an associate professor of civil engineering at the University of the Philippines. He is also a marketing and technical consultant to various real estate developers and construction companies. For comments and advice, you may reach him at aaacacio@pacific.net.ph. or fax to 932-6986.)

Land conversion can co-exist with agrarian reform, says SHDA

By Charles E. Buban

THE country's largest organization of subdivision and housing developers once again assured farmers groups that land conversion for residential use can co-exist with the provisions of agrarian reforms.

"Agricultural lands may remain intact for there are still other areas that could be developed for residential projects," assured Subdivision and Housing Developers Association president Jesus Atencio.

He reiterated that of the country's total land area of 30 million hectares, only 35,314 hectares or just 0.11 percent have converted to residential purposes from 1979 to 2001.

"If we compare this figure to the country's total agricultural area of 10 million hectares, the converted area only accounts to 0.35 percent—still a small area for farmers group to be worried about," Atencio added.

DAR support needed

The SHDA made this assurance amid the appointment of former Bulacan Gov. Roberto "Obet" Pagdanganan as agrarian reform secretary who assumed post last Jan. 20, replacing Hernani Braganza, who has been appointed press secretary.

"DAR must support the administration's housing programs aimed at solving the country's burgeoning need for housing and settlements," he said.

The current estimates from the housing backlog stood at 4.5-million homeless families. The present administration has targeted one million houses constructed for the next three years.

The SHDA last year signed a declaration before Macapagal a commitment to provide more than 200,000 new housing units before 2004.

According to SHDA, the granting of conversion and exemption certificates from DAR is crucial in attaining the target housing unit.

Supportive

SHDA chair Teofisto Guingona III said developers are supportive of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's objectives of providing farmers land tenure and food sufficiency.

"But let us not forget that the President also have a pledge to provide shelter to the majority of the population," said Guingona.

He said that the newly appointed DAR secretary must find an effective way to efficiently fast-track the processing of applications for exemption and conversion clearances without jeopardizing the department's mandate of protecting agricultural lands.

At present, SHDA developers have over 50 pending applications before the department, which roughly translates to some 850 hectares capable of producing 55,000 new housing units.

Win-win solution

"I'm sure we can find a win-win solution over these two seemingly contradicting issues," stressed Guingona. "After all we are both for the upliftment of every Filipino's life, the farmers included."

For its part the developers reiterated their willingness to follow DAR rules and regulations concerning conversion and subdivision and housing development.

"Since the conversion and exemption certificate is crucial, SHDA supports the formulation of an overall land use plan that could guide developers and planners where to locate their specific development projects," said Atencio. "At the same time we can leave agricultural lands intact for agrarian reform and food production."

At present, housing developers depend on development permits issued by local government units, and the time it takes to complete the plans and physical framework plans varies from one place to another.

New community rising in Southern Metro Manila

A MERE eight months since it was first launched in the market, a new community is now becoming visible in Southern Metro Manila. Verdana Homes, a 25-hectare subdivision, is the flagship project of Community Innovations Inc., an Ayala Land subsidiary.

With almost all lots sold out and more than 70 percent of the house-and-lot packages taken up, Verdana Homes has established a new standard for the first home of the young urban achievers.

VERDANA Homes

One of the prime attractions of the community at the border of Las Piñas and Bacoor, Cavite is its proximity to the self-contained Ayala Alabang community, it being just a 10-minute drive from the Alabang Town Center, Ayala Alabang Village and Madrigal Business Park. Jonathan Umali, CII project development head, adds: "Moreover, the high quality of the project and its sustained pace of development have made Verdana one of the most sought-after properties."

This early, roads, street lamps, security and provisions for basic utilities are in place in the first phase of the project where crickets can still be heard in the early morning. Aside from two model units, several clusters of homes are under construction. "We expect to turn over the first homes by the end of this year as scheduled," Umali disclosed.

Within reasonable commuting distance of Metro Manila's key business districts, Verdana Homes features six options of house-and-lot packages with floor area ranging from 122 square meters to 214 sq. m Prices of these models go from P4.1 to P6.8 million.

The community is managed by Ayala Property Management Corp., which has contributed to the preservation and rise in value of many developments including Ayala Westgrove and Ferndale Homes.

Mindanao ports urged to raise efficiency levels

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

MINDANAO'S seaports need to raise their efficiency levels and modernize infrastructure facilities if the island is to develop its full potential to become the country's next leading agriculture, trade and investment hub.

This is a view shared by Rene Subido of the Growth with Equity in Mindanao program and other development planners who have been lobbying over the years for improvements in the country's port system and the lowering of logistics costs.

Productivity

"A majority of domestic ports, especially in Mindanao, have shown very low-productivity levels as compared to their foreign counterparts," Subido notes. "Productivity in local ports are in fact only around 50 percent of the efficiency level in other international ports."

Studies estimate that around 80 percent of domestic cargo and passenger traffic are moved through sea transport. Because of the country's "archipelagic makeup," inter-island shipping is the preferred mode of shipment due to its capacity to accommodate larger passenger and cargo volumes.

Infrastructure

Port infrastructure, Subido says, have also remained inadequate and unresponsive to the needs of increasing trade activities in the island.

This situation, he points out, does not augur well for Mindanao's economy, as inefficient port operations influence the level of freight rates. "There is no other way but to improve our sea transport system. Or else, Mindanao will be held back from achieving its full potential as an agricultural producer and manufacturer."

3 ports

Philippine Ports Authority data show that the Zamboanga and General Santos ports have already reached Berth Operating Rates of 80 percent and 72 percent, already above the 70 percent BOR ceiling set by the PPA to indicate the need for a particular port's expansion.

Similarly, the Davao Port is also nearing congestion.

By the year 2005, the PPA calculates that these three ports would exceed their present cargo-handling capacities by over 100 percent. The Zamboanga Port is projected to handle the largest cargo volume, while the Davao Port is estimated to handle the least volume.

Emerging bright spots

There are, however, some emerging bright spots in Mindanao's sea transport sector.

In General Santos City, the South Cotabato Integrated Port Services Inc. (Scipsi), cargo-handling operator of Makar Wharf, has succeeded in successfully increasing the port's efficiency level by improving its port facilities and management systems.

"Before the new management of Scipsi took over in 1999, port efficiency was very low, as our operations were very labor intensive," recalls Vic Estenor, Scipsi controller.

Productivity-wise, Makar Wharf then could only handle around five TEUs (or five 20-foot containers per hour per crane), which is relatively low by international standards.

The Scipsi management knew that the only way to improve the port's capability was to upgrade its equipment. "We knew that we had to invest a substantial amount to modernize but we believed that our decision would eventually bear fruit," Estenor says.

Model port

Now a model port in Mindanao, Makar Wharf's current cargo-handling capacity is an impressive 18 TEUs. This figure, he says, could still improve as the company plans to bring in additional equipment that could further raise their cargo-handling capacity to 25 TEUs.

Scipsi general manager Rico Cruz says that domestic ports need to benchmark against international ports if the local shipping industry would like to boost its competitiveness in the international arena.

According to Cruz, benchmarking should be done on an international level because foreign vessels that call on Philippine ports have very high standards. "How can we expect foreign vessels to call on our local ports if they turn out to be below par?"

"Foreign vessels put a premium on the quality of a port's infrastructure and facilities," Cruz points out. Foreign vessels, he adds, would not hesitate to look for other ports of call outside the country if domestic ports cannot provide the necessary services and cargo-handling capacities.

In the case of Scipsi, it used the ports of Singapore and Hong Kong as its major benchmarks. "I have been to these ports and I can say that their efficiency levels are truly world-class. If we want to attract more foreign investments, these are the ports we should emulate."

Stakeholders

Cruz believes that the stakeholders in the port cargo-handling operations—the government, port users and cargo-handling operators—should work hand in hand to review Philippine ports operation in comparison to Hong Kong and Singapore in terms of equipment investment for the operator and cargo handling cost for the port user.

A balance between investment and competitive quality of service required by port users needs to be done. "This would encourage port operators to pour in more investments to upgrade their facilities and improve efficiency levels," Cruz says.

For his part, Subido believes that improved port services would spur competition in the local shipping industry. Once efficiency levels are raised and quality service becomes the norm, all industry stakeholders would reap the benefits especially Mindanao's thriving agriculture sector.

Seminar on buying and financing your first home

OWNING a home is the dream of every family. Unfortunately, along the way in realizing their dreams, first-time home buyers commit a lot of avoidable mistakes or become victims of frauds and unethical practices of real estate professionals and developers.

To guide first-time home buyers in today's real estate circumstances toward a smooth experience of buying their first homes, Urban Institute of Real Estate will conduct a two-day seminar on "Buying and Financing Your First Home" on Jan. 25 and Feb. 1, from 1:30 to 6:00 p.m., at Joni's Bakeshop, Pasay Road, Makati City.

Topics for Day 1 include common mistakes of first-time home buyers determining how much you can afford; the right type of home for you; criteria on where to live; the right neighborhood for you; what you should know about property taxes; tips on looking for bargain alternatives; services of real estate professionals; home inspection; negotiating the price and terms; and other expenses that you should be aware of.

Among the topics for Day 2 are tips on securing a mortgage; what you must watch out; how much down payment; government subsidized mortgages; seller's financing; beware of the fine prints; the good and the bad about lease with option to buy schemes; what you should know about mortgages; default and foreclosures; buyer's right under Maceda Law and others.

For more details, interested parties may call up Urban Institute of Real Estate at 681-0928 or e-mail urbanet@pacific.net.ph

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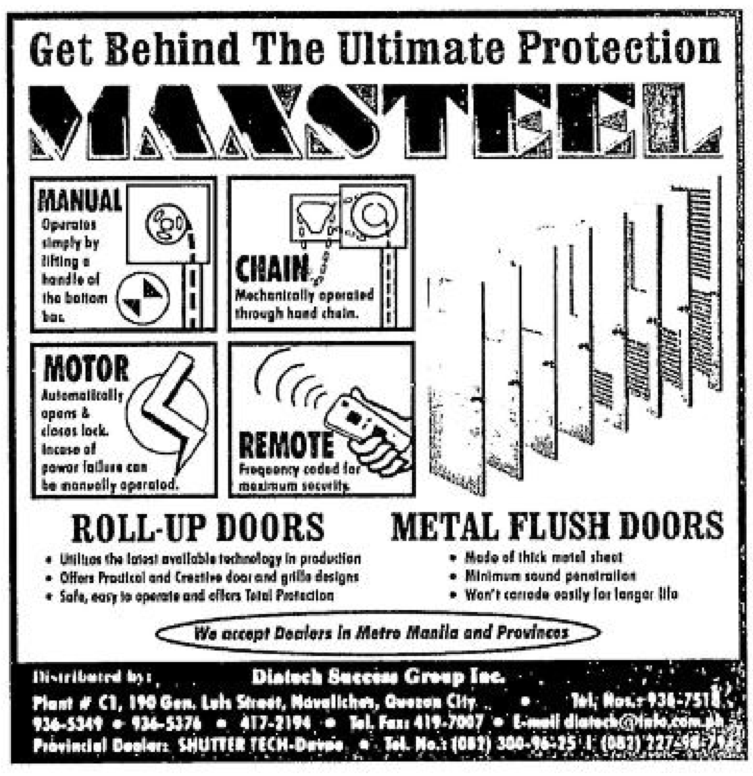
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BUSINESS

Gov't to borrow another ₱60B at home

By Clarissa S. Batino

NATIONAL Treasurer Sergio Edeza said yesterday the government might borrow an additional P60 billion at home should volatility in global markets accelerate.

The government has projected 2003 net foreign borrowings at P95.281 billion and net domestic borrowings at P103.27 billion, partly to fund this year's expected budget deficit of P202 billion, an amount equivalent to 4.7 percent of gross domestic product.

"If we need more, it's about P60 billion that we would expect the (local) markets to absorb," Edeza told reporters, adding that this would be the worst-case scenario.

The government has voiced its preference to borrow more from the domestic market due to expected volatility in offshore markets over a possible US-led war against Iraq.

"The effect of that (a war) should be felt in the foreign market rather than the domestic," Edeza told reporters after the government's regular treasury bill auction.

He attributed the unexpected rise in the rate for benchmark 91-day T-bills to banks adjusting to the bigger volume offered from this year. Rates should stabilize by March, he added.

"The market is still adjusting to the fact of change in the volume from P3.5 billion to P4 billion. They are grappling with the supply issue," Edeza said.

The 91-day T-bills fetched an average rate of 5.248 percent at auction, slightly higher than the 5.121 percent on Jan. 6.

Debt dealers had expected T-bill rates to ease by 5 to 10 basis points given the high liquidity in the market.

The average rate for 364-day bills also rose, while the rate for 182-day bills dropped slightly.

"What we lost in the 91-day, we gained in the 182," Edeza said.

The Treasury is due to issue three-year and five-year bonds worth P3.5 billion each on Tuesday.

"I would not expect anything significantly different. It should be in the range of 10 to 15 basis points either side," Edeza said.

The government is preparing to again issue some P3 billion to P5 billion worth of dollar-linked bonds in February and at least P10 billion worth of retail treasury bonds within the first quarter.

The new borrowings are being lined up to give investors, whose appetite for T-bills seems to be waning, other investment outlets.

"We are considering issuing dollar-linked bonds again in February due to market demand. But we have not finalized the terms yet because we still have to sit down and decide whether we would push through with it," Edeza said.

He said the sale of the retail bonds was being scheduled in February or March.

"We would maximize the sale of retail bonds to as much as what the market can absorb. Aside from raising funds, we want more retail investors to participate and also to take advantage of the risk-free investment," he said. *With a report from Reuters*

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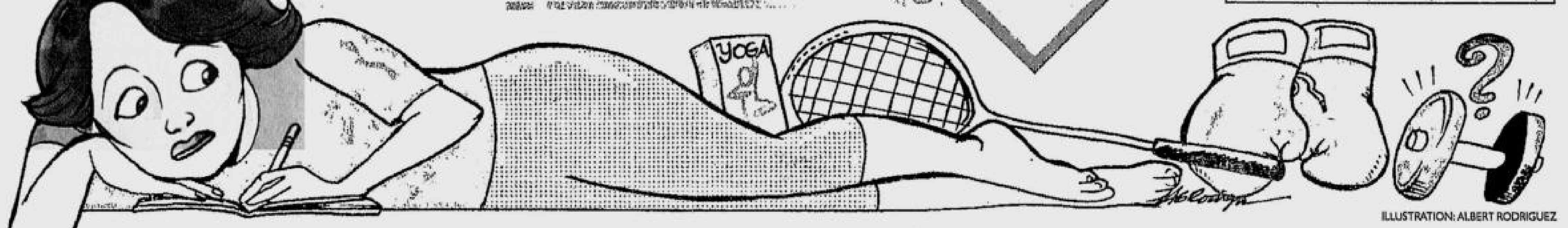

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Combining yoga and weight training

FROM A READER:

I just want to ask if yoga and lifting weights can go together. I've been married for three years and was fairly fit and active prior to getting married. Last year, I realized how big I had become and so I decided to exercise and eat sensibly.

I played badminton three or four times a week and cut down on my food intake. My idea was to eat less than what I could burn. I lost weight! I'm down to 90 pounds (5'1") now, which I know is not good.

My problem is, I'm still very active (yoga, badminton, boxing, and running). I don't want to give up any of these activities but I don't want to lose more weight. I'm eating more now but I'm still eating sensibly. I'd like to gain a bit (of weight) but I don't want to get fat. Is it possible to get bigger but not get fat? Muscle *dapat*, right?

I was thinking of doing weight training, but will this be a good combination with yoga? Will weight training make me less flexible? What if I just stick to yoga? Will this eventually build muscle mass?

SARAH

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

I am always happy to hear success stories from readers who have lost weight and become fit the safe and sensible way. In this case, though, it's a matter of too much of a good thing. A normal weight range for someone who is 5'1" is between 100-125 pounds according to the World Health Organization's Body Mass Index (BMI) rating scale. Weighing 90 pounds at that height is a bit on the underweight side. A more reasonable weight would be 100 pounds, which is at the low end of the BMI standard for normal weight.

Possible but not easy

It is possible to get bigger (increase muscle mass) without gaining in fat, but to add 10 pounds of pure muscle weight is not that easy for a woman. Sarah would have to spend a significant number of hours at the gym, lifting progressively heavier and heavier weights. And it wouldn't happen overnight either. She would not have the energy for her other exercise activities.

Besides, even if she could do them all, she would run the risk of over-training or doing too much exercise. Those activities would also interfere with the growth of her muscles. Anyone who wants to achieve a considerable amount of muscle mass needs to rest between weight-training days to allow muscle growth and repair to take place.

Since Sarah is underweight, what is realistic and achievable in her case is to gain a combination of fat and muscle. Fat is not evil. Our bodies need fat for storage of energy, insulation, padding (imagine how painful it would be to sit down without a layer of fat in your rear end), and skin lubrication. Fat only becomes a problem when we have too much of it.

Yoga consists of poses that develop strength as well as flexibility though overall, it puts more emphasis on suppleness. A well-designed weight-training program will emphasize strength gains but include stretching exercises.

Undeserved

Lifting weights has gotten the undeserved reputation of making one less flexible. But this is because many people don't do the stretches they are supposed to do after the workout, the trainer designing the program doesn't put much emphasis on stretching, or the person has bulked up so much (like the bodybuilders you see competing on television) that the abnormal muscle size interferes with the way his joints are supposed to move.

But even though lifting weights will not make you less flexible, yoga is still the champion when it comes to developing flexibility.

> It is possible, though not easy, for a woman to increase muscle mass without gaining in fat

The stretches done after weight training are not as challenging and are not held as long as the yoga poses that put emphasis on greater flexibility.

Weight training uses the resistance of free weights (barbells and dumbbells), weight stack machines and cable machines to challenge the muscles to grow. When it comes to gaining muscle mass and strength, weight training has the advantage over yoga because the resistance being tackled can progressively become heavier as you get stronger.

Yoga will build strength and muscle mass, but you cannot progress beyond the resistance that your body weight offers. For example, when you do the warrior, your legs are lifting the weight of your body. When you do a plank, your chest, shoulders and triceps carry your body's weight.

In the beginning, it is difficult to do those poses with the proper alignment or to hold them for the required length of time. But the more classes you attend, the easier it becomes. That's because your muscle fibers become stronger and slightly bigger to be able to lift your body. However,

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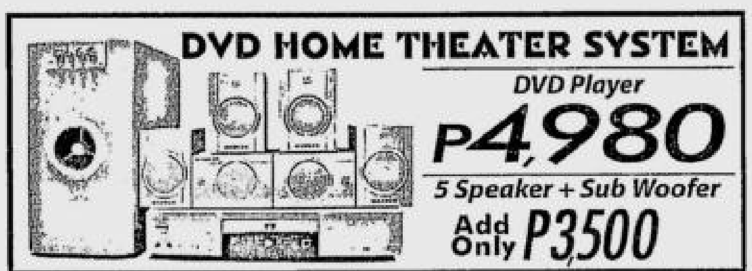
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EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

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THIS Pilates-inspired exercise strengthens the abdominal muscles.

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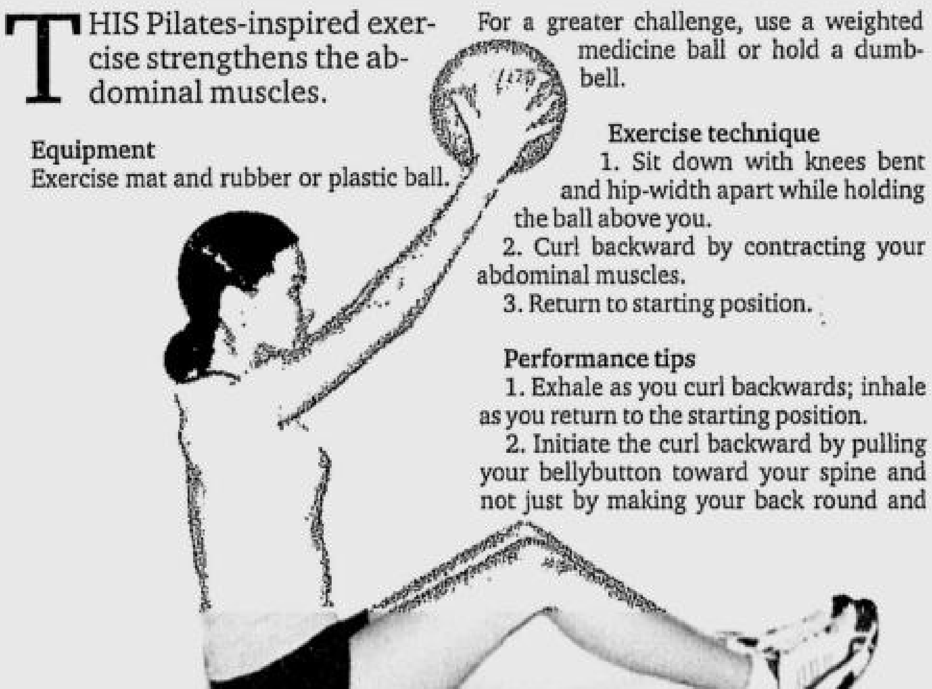


For a greater challenge, use a weighted medicine ball or hold a dumbbell.

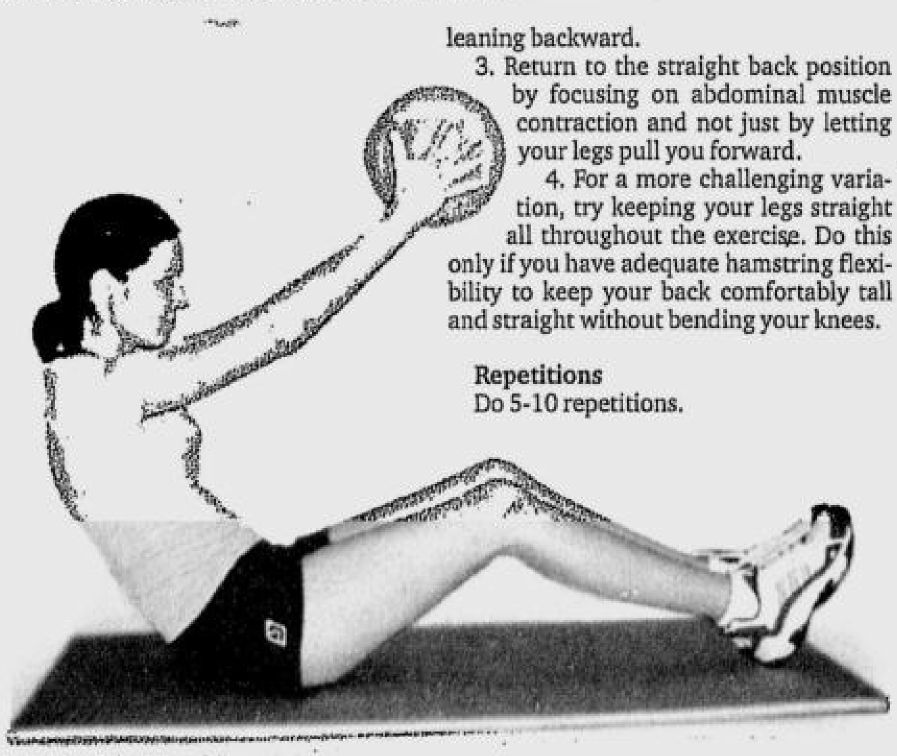
Exercise technique

1. Sit down with knees bent and hip-width apart while holding the ball above you.
2. Curl backward by contracting your abdominal muscles.
3. Return to starting position.

Performance tips

1. Exhale as you curl backwards; inhale as you return to the starting position.
2. Initiate the curl backward by pulling your bellybutton toward your spine and not just by making your back round and leaning backward.
3. Return to the straight back position by focusing on abdominal muscle contraction and not just by letting your legs pull you forward.
4. For a more challenging variation, try keeping your legs straight all throughout the exercise. Do this only if you have adequate hamstring flexibility to keep your back comfortably tall and straight without bending your knees.

Repetitions
Do 5-10 repetitions.



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MEDICard

Looking to learn more about your benefits under your MEDICard coverage? Do you want to be clear on the procedures, which allow you to avail of MEDICard's services? Get your information straight from MEDICard's Medical Director, DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA.

FAQs (frequently asked questions)

During our company's annual physical examination, some of our employees below 40 years of age were prescribed and underwent ECG or pap smear laboratory tests. Yet, our HMO program specifies a 40-year age eligibility for these said APE exams. Why is this so?

Yes, you are correct in stating that the laboratory exams ECG and pap smear for women during annual physical examinations (APE) are only done for member's age 40 years and above (standard program). However, our APE doctor may recommend and prescribe these APE tests regardless whether the patient is below 40 years of age, if during his examination he evaluates a need for these tests to be conducted to further determine the health status of a member.

Meet your MEDICard Team

Eye specialist **Dr. Sidney Y. Cheng** joined MEDICard in 1999. He is our accredited medical service provider based at Medical City General Hospital (MCGH) in Mandaluyong City. Doc Sidney, who finished Medicine at UERM-MMC specializes in Ophthalmology. He also subspecializes in Nuero-Ophthalmology finishing his residency training at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA). For your consultation needs, visit Dr. Cheng at his clinic, Room 601 of the Medico Bldg., every Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays 9 AM to 5 PM, every Wednesdays and Fridays from 1 to 5 PM, and on Saturdays, 9 AM to 12 noon.

More than 38 years of clinical practice makes **Dr. Teresita P. Parcon** one of the most respected medical service providers of MEDICard. Dr. Parcon is the center of all MEDICard member's availments at Doctors Specialty Reactive Medical and Diagnostic Center located at the 2/F Suarez Bldg., Osmeña Blvd. in Cebu City. Dr. Parcon, fondly called "Doktora" is a graduate of Medicine from the University of Santo Tomas and specializes in Family Medicine. She joined MEDICard in 1995. For all your medical needs at the clinic, look for Medical Coordinator Dr. Teresita Parcon, Mondays to Saturdays, from 8 AM to 5 PM.

PLASTIC SURGERY SPECIALISTS: A group that is trained in plastic surgery and board certified by both PCS and PAPRAS specializing in reconstructive as well as aesthetic and cosmetic surgery. They do mammoplasty, rhinoplasty, facelifts, eyelifts, scar revision, liposuction, Botox injections, etc. which they may offer to MEDICard members at special rates. For your surgical consultations, you may see them at the HUMANA Medical Clinic located at the G/F King's Court II Bldg., Chino Roces Ave. (Pasong Tamo), cor. Dela Rosa Sts,, Makati City, from Mondays to Fridays 3 to 6 PM and on Saturdays from 8 to 10 AM.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

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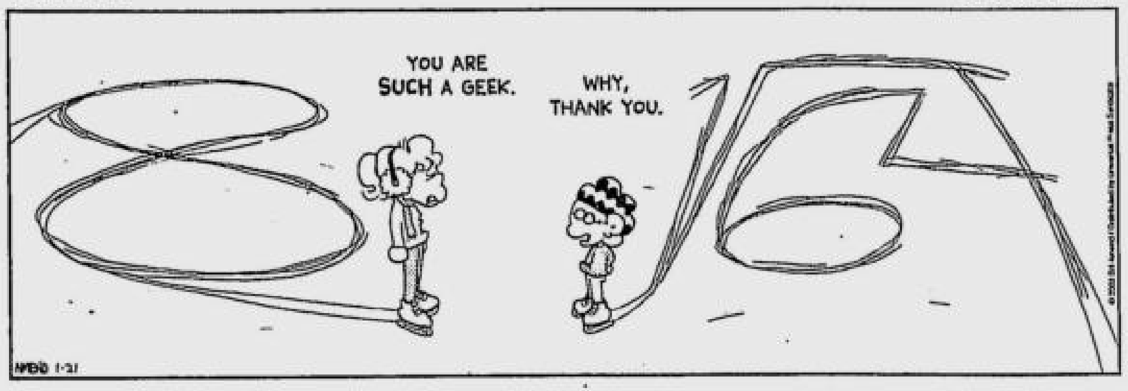
TEXT MEDICard for your queries: 0917-7518365 (Globe) or 0919-2476240 (Smart). Please don't forget to include your complete name and landline number where MEDICard could reach you. Log on to www.medicardphils.com.

MEDICard is the first and only HMO in the Philippines and the whole Asian region to be ISO 9002 certified.

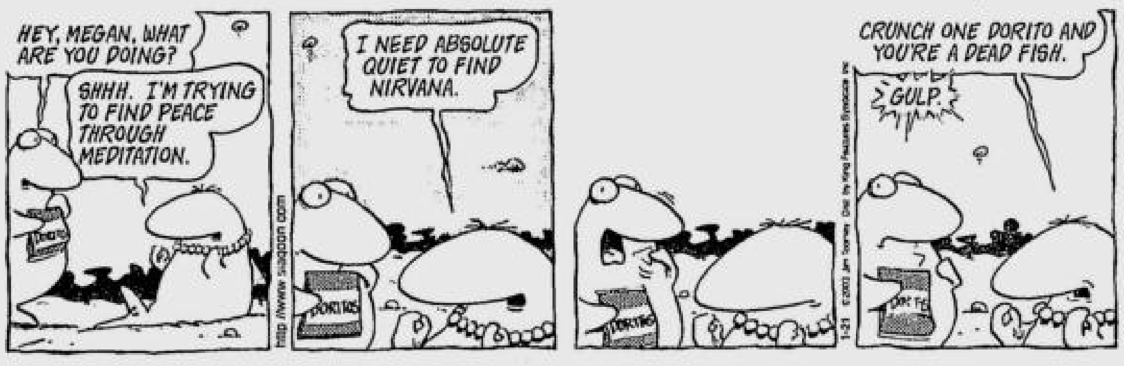
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


YOU ARE SUCH A GEEK.
WHY, THANK YOU.
AMEND 1-21

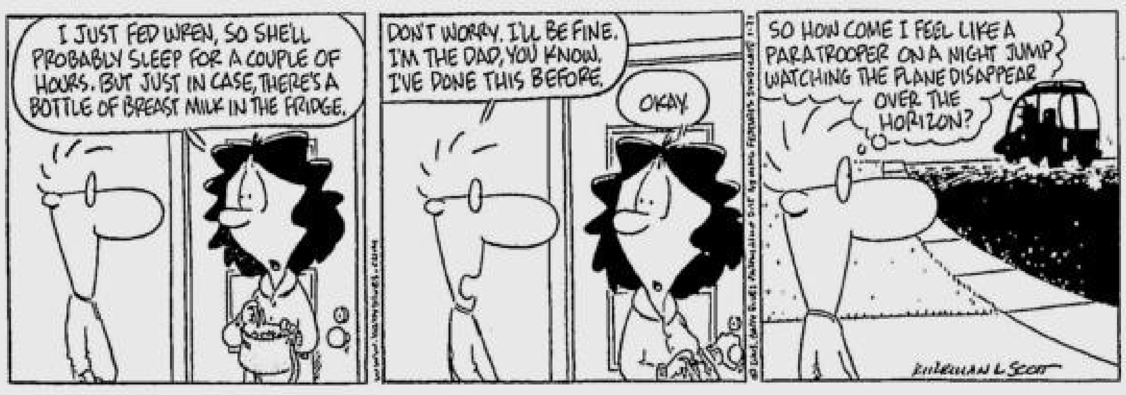
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


HEY, MEGAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SHHH. I'M TRYING TO FIND PEACE THROUGH MEDITATION.
I NEED ABSOLUTE QUIET TO FIND NIRVANA.
CRUNCH ONE DORITO AND YOU'RE A DEAD FISH.
GULP.
http://www.slagoon.com

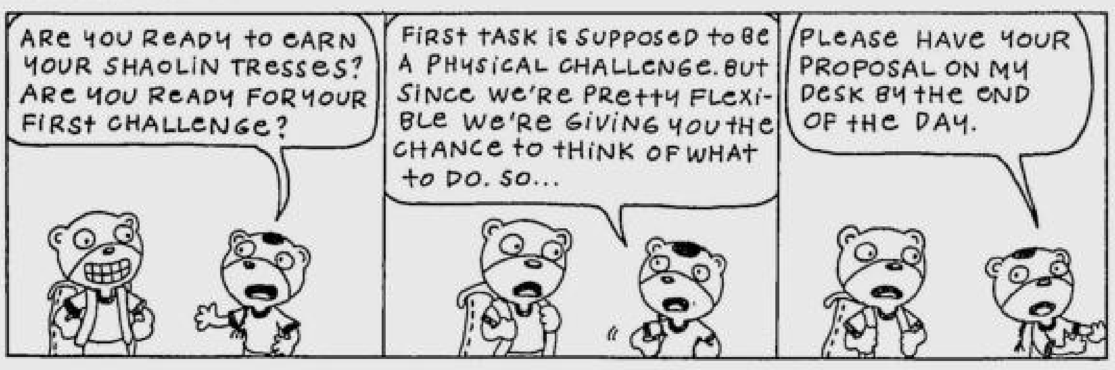
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


I JUST FED WREN, SO SHE'LL PROBABLY SLEEP FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS. BUT JUST IN CASE, THERE'S A BOTTLE OF BREAST MILK IN THE FRIDGE.
DON'T WORRY. I'LL BE FINE. I'M THE DAD, YOU KNOW. I'VE DONE THIS BEFORE.
OKAY.
SO HOW COME I FEEL LIKE A PARATROOPER ON A NIGHT JUMP WATCHING THE PLANE DISAPPEAR OVER THE HORIZON?

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Are you ready to earn your Shaolin tresses? Are you ready for your first challenge?
First task is supposed to be a physical challenge. But since we're pretty flexible we're giving you the chance to think of what to do. So...
Please have your proposal on my desk by the end of the day.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Emma Bunton, Geena Davis, Richie Havens, Placido Domingo

Happy Birthday: You're bright, articulate, outgoing and quite willing to do whatever you have to in order to reach your goals. Discipline and hard work will pay off, and you'll attract people who are just as dynamic as you are this year. Your numbers are 1, 13, 28, 33, 41, 46

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You will find a new job opportunity if you look. Your quick learning ability will enable you to pick up the necessary skills, and you should be able to increase your salary in the process.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You will feel content if you are well-organized and follow through with your plans. Be sure to take part in events that present an intellectual challenge.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Take a step back and try to view your position realistically. If you are having trouble separating your personal responsibilities from your professional ones, you may need to ask for some time off.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Social events will prove to be most enticing and will lead to some interesting conversations and the possibility of a new romance. You can ask for favors today, so don't be a martyr.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Discuss your ideas and others will support you and may possibly even invest. Your dynamic personality will be effective with outsiders, but you will have to be affectionate if you want results at home.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Although everyone appears to want you to solve their problems, you just can't take on that kind of pressure. Focus on a money-making opportunity and begin new friendships.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Absolutely do not spend on something you can do without. You should get out socially today and you'll probably meet someone special.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You will be able to get others to grant you favors if you ask. The only difficulties you will experience with others will be the ones you create yourself.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Keep your thoughts to yourself and you will eliminate half your problems today. Any involvement in gossip or other people's affairs will backfire. Focus on making money.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Talk to people in your field or who share the same interests as you. Say what you think. You will be well received.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't let your lowered vitality get the better of you. Opportunities to make money will be yours. You are likely to find that someone dear to you has a problem that you will be able to help with.

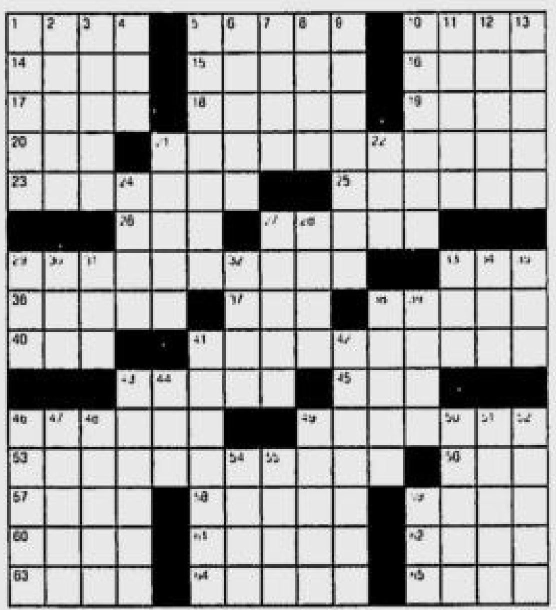
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): This is a great day to accomplish, especially within a partnership. You can make financial gains if you are prepared to work hard.

Birthday Baby: You may not always abide by the rules. You will have a warmth that will draw others into your circle. You will be a team player who can and will make a difference.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Roe source
5 Maui bye-bye
10 Swear, casually
14 Showed up
15 Private instructor
16 Proficient
17 Mature
18 Middle figure?
19 Kerouac book, "On the __"
20 That's __ folks!
21 Delayer in D.C.?
23 Yellowstone attractions
25 Ham actor
26 Gore and Capp
27 Scout's job, in brief
29 Delayer in D.C.?
33 Jackson and Derek
36 Singer Shania
37 Kwik-E-Mart owner on "The Simpsons"
38 Seven times a week
40 High mountain
41 Delayer in D.C.?
43 "...the __ of defeat"
45 __ gratia artis
46 Black eye
49 Bodily structure
53 Delayer in D.C.?
56 Roman noon
57 About
58 La Scala city
59 Diet word
60 Bucks, perhaps
61 Famous fair lady
62 Biographer of Henry James
63 Poet Teasdale
64 Centering points
65 Geek

DOWN
1 Scrawny person
2 Mr. Selassie
3 Sufficiently
4 Tweedle ending?
5 Under the most negative circumstances
6 Hawaiian galas
7 Singer Redding
8 Firefighter's carry
9 Fashionable style of the '30s
10 Old copy
11 German sub
12 Roster of candidates
13 Passover feast
21 Hayes or Hunt
22 Comic Philips
24 Munro in print
27 Answer back
28 Needle case
29 Sch. grp.
30 Barn nester
31 Tooth topper
32 Mirror-loving
33 Memory unit
34 Corrida shout
35 Leb. neighbor
38 Boxer Roberto
39 Helper: abbr.
41 Crew leaders
42 Bonkers
43 Kind of cat
44 Eur. country
46 Lots and lots
47 Book after Daniel
48 Action starter?
49 Fill with wonder
50 Binary compound
51 Bishop's hat
52 Triangular sign
54 Farm outbuilding
55 Lost traction
59 Sportscaster Berman



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

1/21/03

Monday's Puzzle Solved

S	A	W	S	■	S	H	A	H	S	■	C	B	E	R
T	E	E	M	■	I	O	N	I	C	■	A	L	D	O
U	R	S	A	■	N	A	N	C	E	■	P	O	N	S
B	O	H	R	■	B	R	A	■	N	O	R	W	A	Y
■	■	A	T	B	A	Y	■	L	A	N	A	I	■	■
P	U	L	S	E	D	■	M	Y	R	A	■	N	A	B
U	N	L	E	D	■	B	E	N	I	N	■	I	R	A
R	I	O	T	■	G	U	A	N	O	■	O	N	E	S
G	O	V	■	C	A	S	T	S	■	B	U	T	T	E
E	N	E	■	O	U	T	S	■	E	I	T	H	E	R
■	■	R	A	I	N	S	■	G	N	O	M	E	■	■
R	E	C	E	N	T	■	E	R	G	■	O	W	E	N
E	R	O	S	■	L	A	M	I	A	■	D	I	D	O
E	L	M	O	■	E	W	I	N	G	■	E	N	D	S
D	E	E	P	■	T	E	R	S	E	■	D	D	A	Y

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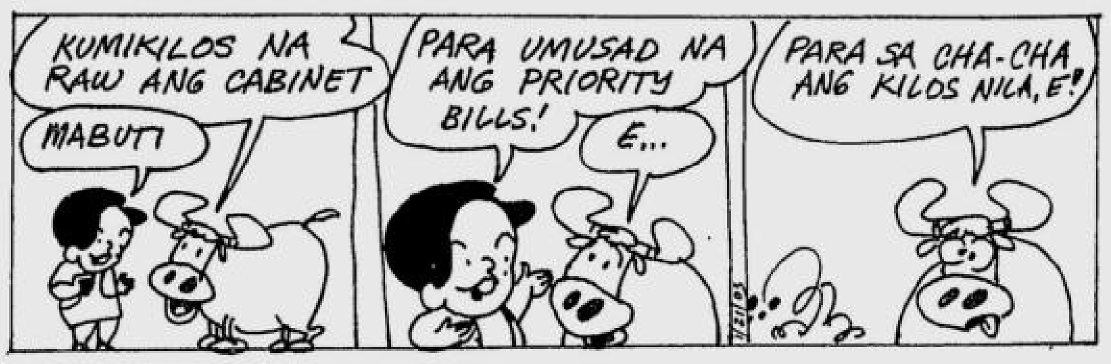
1/21/03

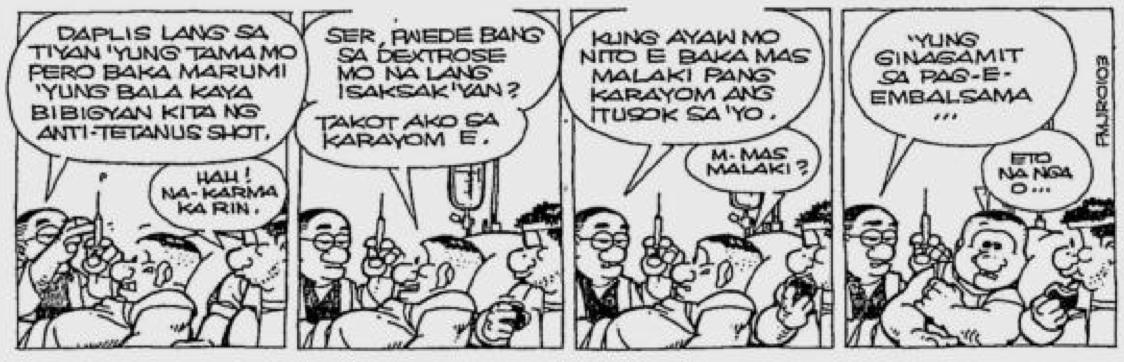
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


KUMIKILOS NA RAW ANG CABINET
MABUTI
PARA UMUSAD NA ANG PRIORITY BILLS!
E...
PARA SA CHA-CHA ANG KILOS NILA, E!

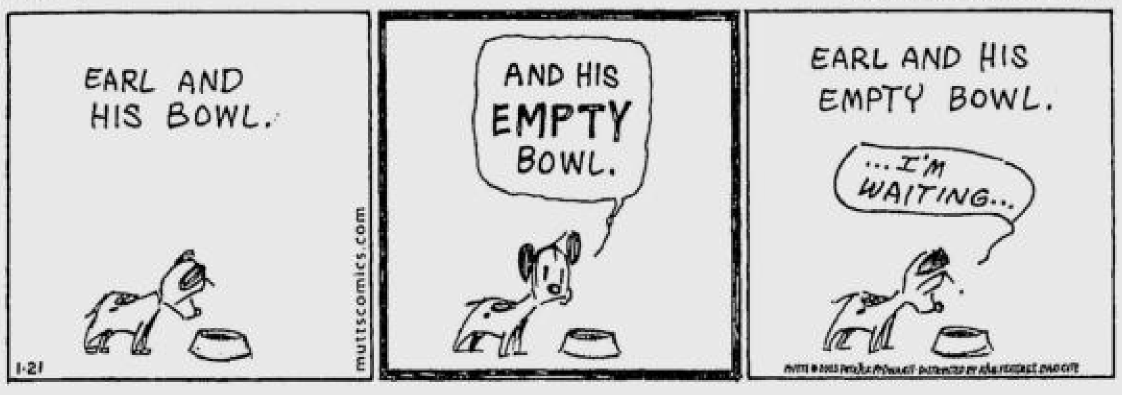
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


DAPLIS LANG SA TIYAN 'YUNG TAMA MO PERO BAKA MARUMI 'YUNG BALA KAYA BIBIGYAN KITA NG ANTI-TETANUS SHOT.
HAH! NA-KARMA KA RIN.
SER, PWEDE BANG SA DEXTROSE MO NA LANG ISAKSAK 'YAN?
TAKOT AKO SA KARAYOM E.
KUNG AYAW MO NITO E BAKA MAS MALAKI PANG KARAYOM ANG ITUSOK SA 'YO.
M-MAS MALAKI?
'YUNG GINAGAMIT SA PAG-E-EMBALSAMA ...
ETO NA NGA O...
PMJR0103

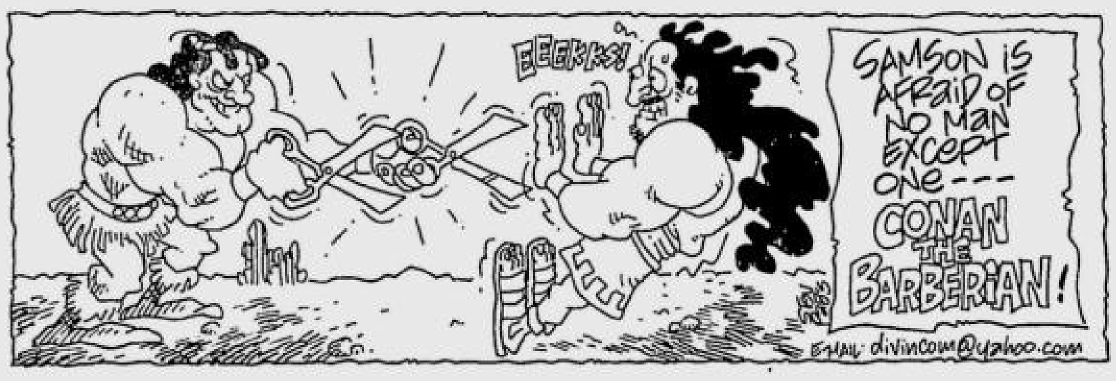
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


EARL AND HIS BOWL.
AND HIS EMPTY BOWL.
EARL AND HIS EMPTY BOWL.
...I'M WAITING...
1-21
muttscomics.com

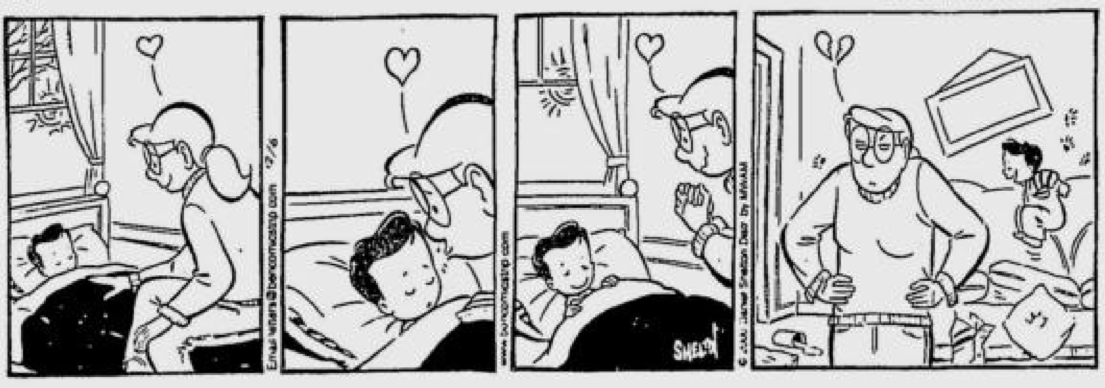
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


EEEKKS!
SAMSON IS AFRAID OF NO MAN EXCEPT ONE--- CONAN THE BARBERIAN!
E-MAIL: divincom@yahoo.com

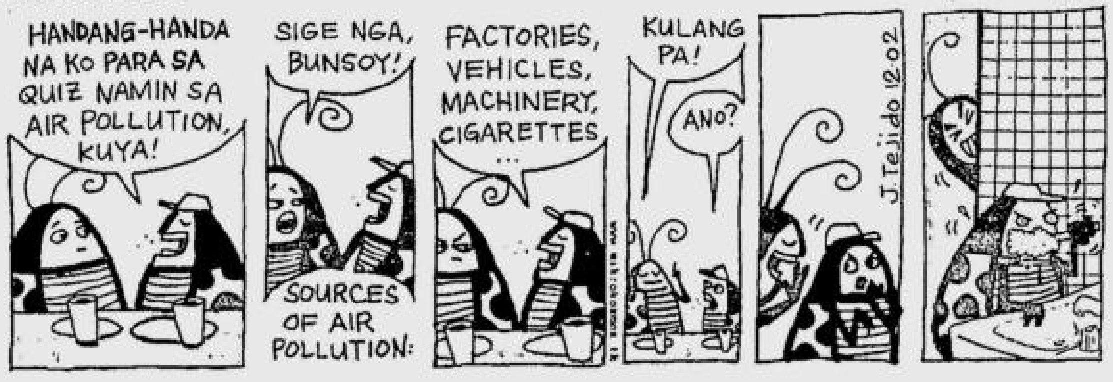
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON



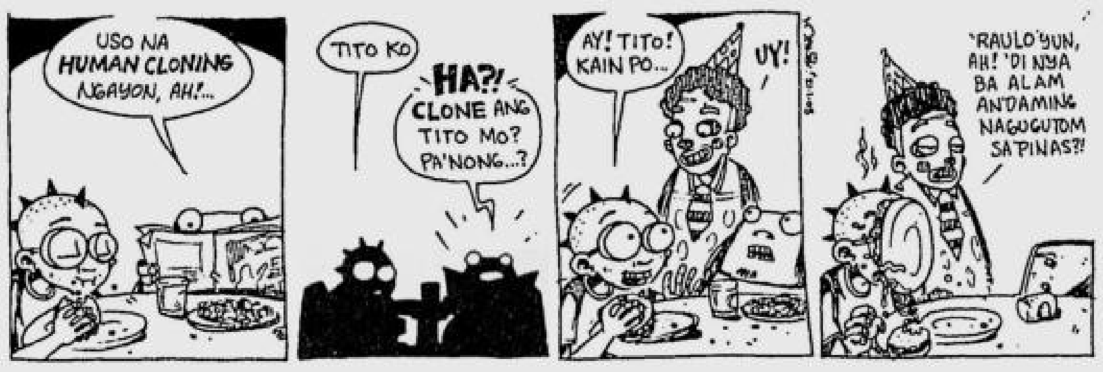
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


HANDANG-HANDA NA KO PARA SA QUIZ NAMIN SA AIR POLLUTION, KUYA!
SIGE NGA, BUNSOY!
SOURCES OF AIR POLLUTION:
FACTORIES, VEHICLES, MACHINERY, CIGARETTES ...
KULANG PA!
ANO?
J. Tejido 12.02

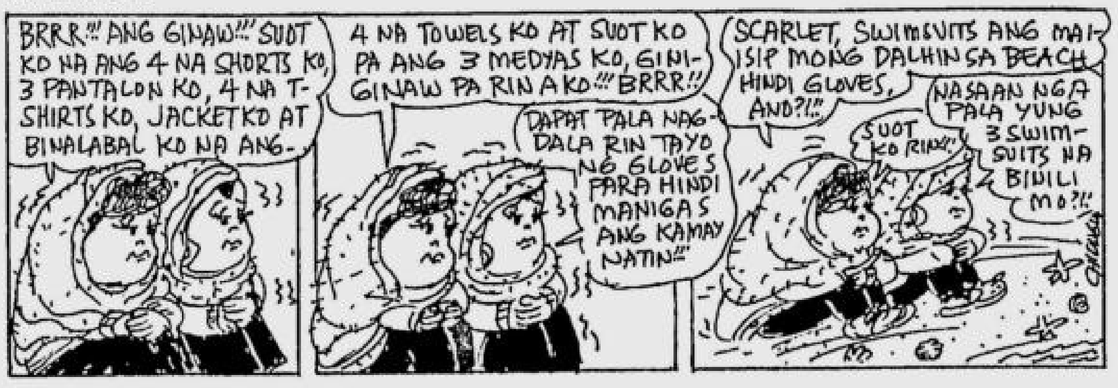
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


USO NA HUMAN CLONING NGAYON, AH!...
TITO KO
HA?! CLONE ANG TITO MO? PA'NONG...?
AY! TITO! KAIN PO...
UY!
'RAULO 'YUN, AH! 'DI NYA BA ALAM AN'DAMING NAGUGUTOM SA 'PINAS?!

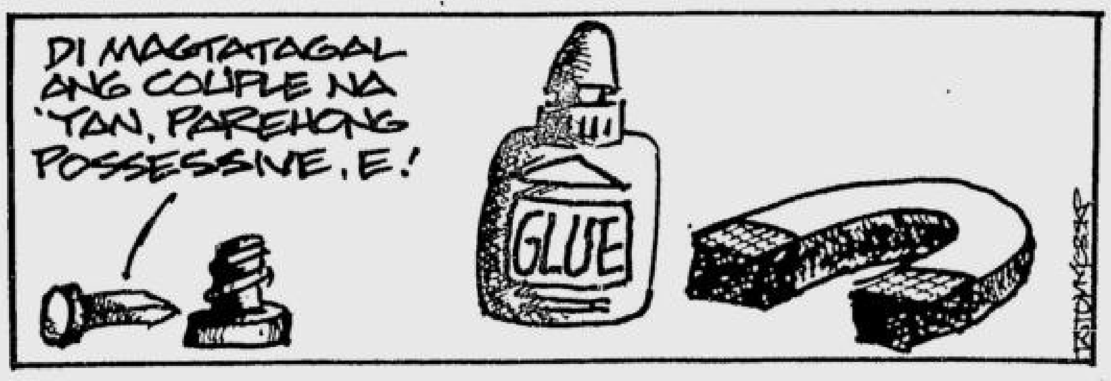
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


BRRR!! ANG GINAW!!! SUOT KO NA ANG 4 NA SHORTS KO, 3 PANTALON KO, 4 NA T-SHIRTS KO, JACKET KO AT BINALABAL KO NA ANG-
4 NA TOWELS KO AT SUOT KO PA ANG 3 MEDYAS KO, GINI-GINAW PA RIN AKO!!! BRRR!!
DAPAT PALA NAGDALA RIN TAYO NG GLOVES PARA HINDI MANIGAS ANG KAMAY NATIN!!
SCARLET, SWIMSUITS ANG MAIISIP MONG DALHIN SA BEACH HINDI GLOVES, ANO?!!
SUOT KO RIN!!
NASAAN NGA PALA YUNG 3 SWIMSUITS NA BINILI MO?!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


DI MAGTATAGAL ANG COUPLE NA 'YAN, PAREHONG POSSESSIVE, E!
GLUE

Strictly and splendidly ballroom

By Ophelia San Juan
Contributor

AT 73, Bacolod-born Cecilia Gomez Knauss of Arizona is winning trophies in the American Smooth, the American Rhythm and, sometimes, the International categories of ballroom dancing—all requiring considerable physical energy as well as graceful dexterity.

The American Smooth consists of the tango, waltz, Viennese waltz (international), fox trot, quick step and bolero. The American Rhythm includes the Latin dances—cha-cha, rumba, samba, mambo, salsa; and the East Coast, swing and jive. A contestant has to do some 21 dances in quick, no-rest succession.

It is no mean feat of kinetic energy, stamina and grace under pressure even for younger people.

"You see, I can give many teenagers a run for their money," said Knauss, who won at the Hilton East Hotel in Tucson, Arizona, last year. Her trophy was added to some 60 others accumulated since 1988 when she began to take lessons in ballroom dancing.

She has also won in other Pro-Am competitions, like the Dallas Southwestern Invitational Dance Sport Championship, where she was a semifinalist, the Las Vegas Dance Classic and the LA Emerald Ball.

Traveling the dance floor

"We follow the events wherever they are to be held," she told Filipino dance enthusiasts at the Jade Entertainment "Dance With Me" weekly contest at the Westin Philippine Plaza, in which the INQUIRER is one of the sponsors.

The Filipinos will excel in this art-physical exercise, Knauss said, given their musical bent and natural grace.

International ballroom dances are done very differently from the Philippine way of dancing, however, according to her. The Americans, for example, do tighter turns even with the tango and the cha-cha, their movements concentrated on the hips. Philippine dancers, she noticed, travel a lot on the dance floor, while professionals abroad "burn" their dancing shoes on almost the same spot.

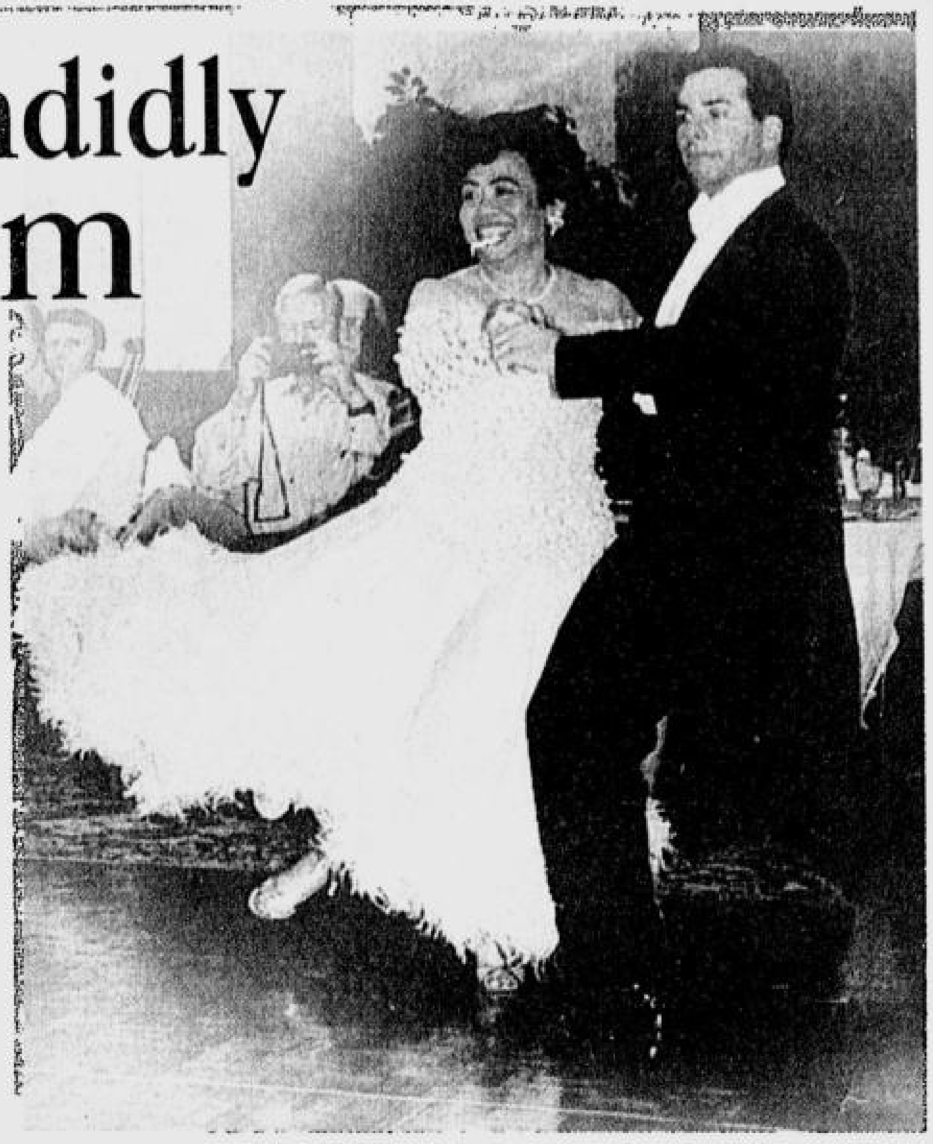
Knauss, who has been residing in the US since 1958 when she became a Fulbright exchange student and later a scholar of both the Danforth and Hazen foundations, is interested in bringing American dancers and academic faculty members like herself regularly to the Philippines. Likewise, she would like to explore the possibility of bringing Filipino dancers to American competitions.

Dancefest

She is currently in the Philippines with the Arizona Ballroom Company, a contingent of US dance competitors and their coaches, all professionals licensed by the National Dance Council of America Inc. (NDCA).

The ABC group are having a WOW! Ballroom Extravaganza at Cavite's Island Cove Resort at 8 tonight and at Intramuros' Villa.

Winning at dance competitions is only the latest in Knauss' list of achievements ("I cannot even do social dancing only," she laments at her inability to pursue pure relaxation, "but I have no regrets").



CECILE Gomez Knauss, a Fred Astaire Dance Studio graduate, is with the Arizona Ballroom Company.

Cecilia Gomez Knauss, a veteran of dance competitions, admits she can't do just social dancing anymore

She left the Philippines as head of the English department in Silliman University. In the US, she was also head of the communications department of a community college, teaching English as a second language, writing, literature, and media communications.

An award she is particularly proud of is the recent National Award in Teaching Excellence given by the Nisod (National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development) in Austin, Texas. She and two others bested some 2,600 teachers in America for the award. It came in recognition of her having pioneered in computer literacy in her school.

Practice makes perfect

As a dancer, she prepares for her events with the same enthusiasm that she has shown in her academic pursuits. She practices, practices and practices. Aside from that, she does nothing more special by way of diet, sleep and rest, except to take everything in moderation. She exercises by walking, and relaxes with a good book.

She is in the process of writing a novel that will be a reflection of the many faces of America and the Philippines.

Knauss has been found by a recent health examination to be ab out 15 years younger than her biological age. She has only one ailment: she is a borderline diabetic.

Thankfully, her doctor has prescribed dancing as one activity she should never give up. It will keep her sugar level on an even keel.

A Muslim healer named Warka

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

HOW would you react if you received a letter from a complete stranger from a remote place in the Philippines telling you that there's an extraordinary Tausug healer in Zamboanga who "has x-ray vision and can see inside the human body, repair the problem and heal all kinds of diseases by simply laying his hands on the affected area? This healer, according to the letter-writer, is a Muslim who does not believe in violence.

My first reaction was guarded skepticism when I first read the Nov. 9 letter of Elizabeth L. Palcat of General Santos City about 44-year-old healer Warka Adala, who was seeking my help in investigating his psychic healing gifts.

Though skeptical, I was intrigued and replied that I was interested in investigating Warka's so-called healing powers. They were in Manila a month later. My first impression of him when we met on Dec. 20 was positive.

Warka turned out to be a charming individual with a childlike and spontaneous disposition. He called me his "master," a term I really dislike when applied to me, because, he said he "learned so much" from my books and newspaper columns.

To find out if he really had the powers claimed by Ms Palcat, I invited him to come the next day to the psychic and healing festival at the SM Megamall organized by a group led by faith healer Nida Canlas, and where I was a speaker. I expected some healers and patients to be there also.

Healing session

I requested the organizers to let him treat some patients so I could observe him. An elderly woman who was having difficulty walking because of arthritis said she was relieved of her pain after Warka's treatment. An overweight executive of a fast-food chain had to go to the bathroom after Warka touched his abdomen to remove excess fat. The healer warned him that this might happen because his body would be eliminating fats and toxins.

In the evening, I tested his powers by asking him to hold my right wrist, which was painful due to arthritis. I told myself if the pain disappeared, I'd believe he had some healing powers. Well, after he had laid his hand lightly on my wrist for just five minutes, the pain did disappear!

So the next day, I brought him to my ancestral house in San Juan, where I invited relatives and friends to come for healing. About 20 showed up. Almost all got healed, except three or four. It was an impressive healing performance considering the cases he encountered that day—back pain, hernia, cysts in the breast, sore throat, blurring of vision, migraine, headache, sinusitis, constipation, tendonitis, chest pains, hearing difficulty, etc.

Because of what I saw Warka do, I invited him to my Sunday evening radio program over DZMM, and the rest is history! So many people came to see him at his temporary quarters in a small hotel in Makati.

When the owner of the place (the wife of a retired general) saw the multitude, she drove the healer away from the premises, even though he was attending to a person with hyperthyroidism, whose eyes were already popping out of their sockets. The owner shouted at the top of her voice, "I don't need your money!"

Good Samaritans Erwyn Lumanog, Dr. Bataclan and another patient gave money to get a room for Warka in a bigger hotel nearby.

Word quickly spread about this Muslim miracle healer from Zamboanga, so that a stream of patients began to flock wherever he was doing healing. Since the funds raised were only enough for two days, Warka and his assistant, Beth Palcat, had to move to another place. A former student of mine, Artemio Cataquiz, a businessman from Pateros, offered the unoccupied second floor of his building for healing. Over 450 patients flocked there the next Monday after I aired the testimonials of people who were healed by Warka the previous week.

What ailments had positive results from Warka's healing energy? Goiter, arthritic pains, deafness, asthma, sinusitis, poor eyesight (almost blind), deafness, herpes, diabetes, depression, scoliosis, tendonitis, cyst in the breast, ulcer, back pain, frozen shoulders, and many more.

Nature of Warka's energy

It is difficult to describe the healing energy radiated or released by Warka. I don't even know what to call it.

Definitely it is not similar to *pranic* energy or bio-energy, although it could be partly that. Why? Because *pranic* energy is applied without touching the body of the patient. It works through the etheric and energy bodies of the person. And it does not have the same effect as Warka's.

The healing energy possessed by Warka seemed to be more powerful. It could penetrate through the marrow of the bones and dissolve cysts and lumps with one touch. It could shrink goiter or enlarged thyroid gland. It could melt excess fat in overweight men and women. It could remove the most severe physical pain of arthritic patients, even those with angina or chest pains. It could clear up the eyes of cataract sufferers, or those with very poor vision. It could also loosen up stiff necks and frozen shoulders. It could even heal hemorrhoids and hernia.

I still don't know the extent or limits of his healing powers nor what other diseases it can cure or fail to cure.

The only one that comes close to what I have seen is the healing power of an African named Eric Vormanns, whom I met in Sacramento, California, several years ago. He sees the body of a patient surrounded by smoke. What he does is to align, balance, or cleanse that smoke, which is probably the human aura.

Vormann's technique appears more akin to *pranic* healing than to Warka's method.

All Warka does is place his right hand lightly on top of the affected area for five to 15 minutes. During that time, he concentrates on the disease and sees what's happening to that part of the body. He say's he repairs mentally whatever is the problem with a person.

He does not diagnose an illness but asks the patient where the problem is, and then places his hand on the affected part, closes his eyes and concentrates. He does not have any mantra, *oracion* or prayer. Neither does he call on any particular spirit or saint. He simply lets his tremendous energy flow into the patient's body.

There is certainly a great need for more research to be done on Warka's mysterious healing powers. Unfortunately, the medical profession considers this type of healing to be pure quackery despite the testimonies of hundreds of patients who have been healed by it.

Meanwhile, offers to provide Warka and his assistant a healing place and living quarters continue to pour in from grateful patients. If the reader would like to know his healing schedule in Manila and elsewhere, call Beth Palcat at (0916) 485-8623. Don't call me or this paper.

Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City or e-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Visit my new website at http://j.licauco.tripod.com. Listen to my DZMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.

Renewing ties

K-SWISS, makers of the original all-white leather tennis shoes, has recently renewed ties with GlobalBrands, one of the most established fashion and sportswear distributors in the country, in a contract signing held at the K-Swiss trade show at Discovery Suites.

GlobalBrands, which belongs to the top 1,000 corporations in the Philippines, after having been acquired by PPMVentures (PPMV), was recently accorded the Merit of Excellence Award in the field of direct-selling given by the Direct Selling Association of the Philippines and the Hall of Fame citation from the Consumer Union of the Philippines for product quality, price performance, distribution efficiency and total customer service.

GARY Parsons and May Carla Pastor of K-Swiss, with Christian Bernecker of PPMVentures

Present at the contract signing were Gary Parsons, president of K-Swiss Asia-Pacific region, Christian Bernecker, PPMV investment manager; May Carla Pastor, K-Swiss VP for marketing; and Alex Bautista, VP for marketing, W. Brown. GlobalBrands is also the distributor of W.Brown and WBN Fashion.

Combining yoga and weight training

From page C1

once the muscles have gotten used to the challenge, they will not get any stronger or bigger because the re- sistance (your body weight) will not change.

Gaining by eating more

If Sarah wants to add more muscle mass beyond what yoga can offer, my advice to her would be to try and gain 10 pounds by eating more and adding a weights program to her exercise routine. She can still do her other exercise activities (yoga, badminton, boxing, running), but she may have to lessen the frequency and shorten the duration.

Badminton, boxing and running are all primarily cardiovascular and aerobic forms of exercise. She can do each of them once a week on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. She can do her yoga and weights on Tuesday and Thursday, with an additional weights session on Saturday.

I suggest putting the weight training on the same day as the yoga because both exercise formats develop strength, and her body can "rest" on the days in between while she does her aerobic training. Of course, this is just one example of how someone with Sarah's goals can arrange his/her workout schedule. An experienced fitness trainer can discuss with her other ways of doing this.

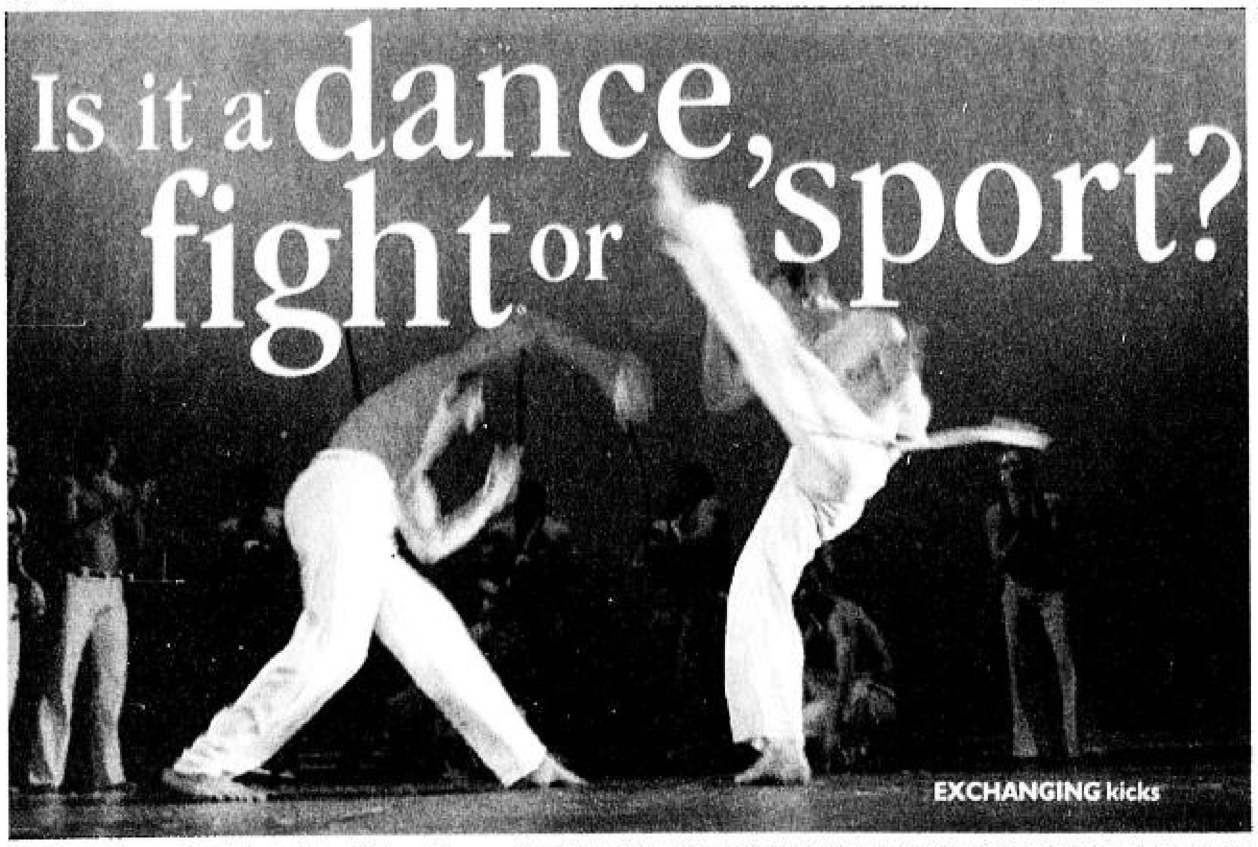
It can be exhausting to do weights after a yoga session or vice versa if you are not used to it. So Sarah has to gradually build up her strength to avoid injuring herself. Her weights program should not be complicated with plenty of sets and three kinds of exercises just for the chest, for example. To save time, it should be a straightforward, simple routine of one type of exercise per body part (chest, lats, biceps, triceps, quadriceps, hamstrings and buttocks, rotator cuff) and one set of eight to 12 repetitions.

There is no need for her to do exercises for the abdominals, lower back, and shoulders because these muscle groups are well covered in her yoga routine. The rotator cuff muscles are a set of four small muscles that surround the shoulder joint like a cuff. Anyone who does a lot of activities that involve the shoulder (in Sarah's case, badminton, boxing and yoga) should strengthen these muscles to prevent shoulder joint injury.

Sarah can still gain weight even if she eats sensibly (avoiding or eating only occasionally sweets, chips, pastries, saturated animal fat, etc) by eating bigger portions of foods high in healthy calories like nuts, seeds, fatty fish, salad dressings made with and food fried in heart-healthy monounsaturated and polyunsaturated oils that are not hydrogenated, and smoothies and shakes made with nonfat yogurt, milk and fruits. She can also indulge in bigger portions of bread and pasta made of whole-wheat flour and brown rice.

Watch "In Fitness & In Health" Mondays to Fridays on Studio 23 (Channel 23) at 6-6:30 a.m. and on Net 25 at 6-6:30 p.m. For questions and past articles and exercises, go to www.tinajuanfitness.com.

Is it a dance, fight or sport?



EXCHANGING kicks

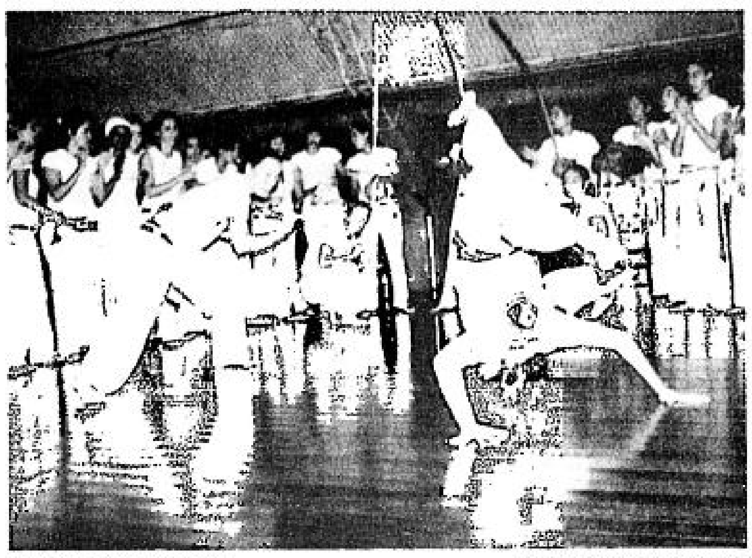
'Capoeira' can be any of those things but it is, above all, a game

Text and photos by Nicole Naval-Severino
Contributor

A HYBRID of elements from centuries of colonial slavery, *capoeira (cap-WEY-ra)* has ingeniously transformed fighting into an artistic expression. Integrating acrobatic prowess and marvelous agility, the body becomes a vehicle for physical self-expression. It can can be a pawn in an intricate battle of wills or a tool for celebrating defiance of space and gravity.

Capoeira can seem like a playful, almost childlike sport mimicking deadly blows and interspersed with gymnastic display. There swings a stunning kick, here comes a graceful cartwheel. Onlookers surround a pair engaged in mock battle, and an unfamiliar music resonates amid lively clapping and chanting.

Done to music from curious instruments, the dance is a cultural treat. The entertaining music is, in fact, only one facet of the sleek disguise this martial art wears. To continue honing their combat skills under Portuguese slave masters, blacks brought from Africa were said to have modified fight into dance, into game.



AN ALL-GIRLS *roda*

BRAZILIAN School of Capoeira (EBC)

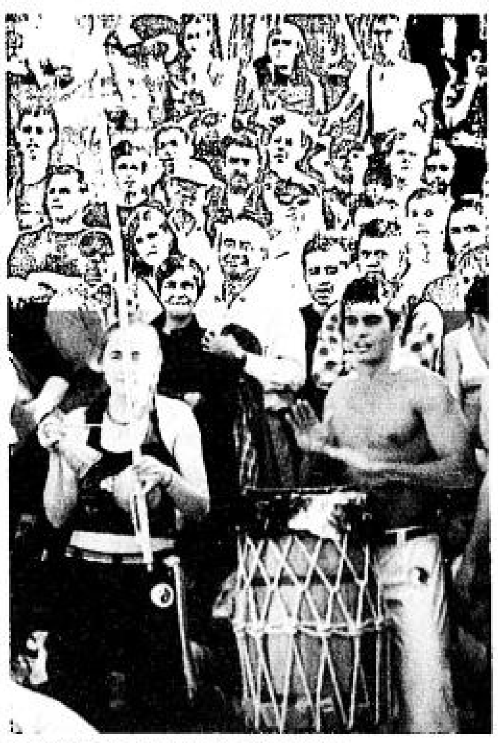
It is now the Brazilian national sport—and appropriately so. For a country where *carnaval* is an institution and *futbol* a religion, this exotic sport is a way of life. Its philosophy is based on a subversive attempt to navigate the tricks and turns of a slave's oppressive world. It is an analogy for reality where discipline, hard work, and a clever mind are the ultimate resources. It also creates for the human body a new space and a new language of motion.

Angola e Regional

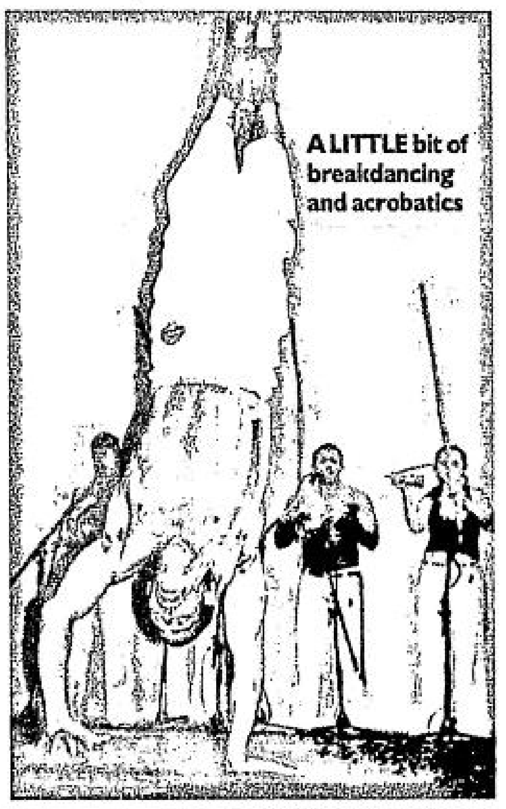
Now seen the world over—it can be spotted in the latest North American videos and is integrated into many artistic performances in Europe—the dance began on a much humbler scale, on the shores of Salvador and Recife in northeastern Brazil, and runaway slave republics (*quilombos*) hidden among dense jungles.

It emerged as a suppressed form of cultural expression in a new and strange land by the blacks who suffered from discrimination for hundreds of years. In the early 1900s, two men formed the distinctive styles that gave *capoeira* a newfound status and allowed it to overcome its notoriety.

ANGOLA style



TYPICAL *capoeira* instruments



A LITTLE bit of breakdancing and acrobatics

The late Manoel dos Reis Machado, better known as Mestre Bimba, took *capoeira* from the streets and brought it into gymnasiums, forming the first official academy. Borrowing practices such as ranking and training from Asian martial arts, he gave the sport, previously seen as a vagabond's pastime, some much needed respectability. Machado is considered the father of a style known as Regional, dominated by eye-catching blows. Kicks are quickly traded and woven into a series of acrobatic motions called *floreios* (literally "flower"; beautifying the game).

Preserving *capoeira*'s roots and traditions, on the other hand, was the work of famed Mestre Pastinha, who was associated with the style called Angola. Emphasizing strategy over flamboyance, this style's movements are closer to the ground and wily. Traps can be set as easily as they are unmasked, and players appear to be in silent but tricky concentration where even a smile can beat the odds.

Musica de Capoeira

The principal instrument used in *capoeira* music is a bow-like rod of wood with a single string, called a *berimbau (bee-rim-bow)*, originally from Yoruba-inhabited parts of Africa. Resonance through a hollowed calabash gourd produces the distinctive "twangs" when the wire is hit with a stick.

The tempo and rhythm of the *berimbau's* playing moderates the game. These are so ingrained in the *capoeirista* (practitioner of *capoeira*) that the instrument is said to have the ability to "call" players to the game. The *berimbau* and two other African percussion instruments (the *atabaque*, a large, conga-like drum, and the *pandeiro* or tambourine) form the *capoeira* orchestra.

Participants sing in dialogue with the musicians, inspiring, critiquing, retelling and emphasizing the energy of the *roda* (circle of play). This interaction between musicians and participants engages the entire collective in the ever-changing character of the game. The audience participates by egging players on, calming them down, recounting legends of old, or merely cheering a brilliant move.

Roda da Vida

The art can be described as a never-ending game of karate kicks sewn into a base of break dancing and contortionism. The dazzling combination of music and motion is heady and spectacular. To participate is to allow the body to become an instrument of the mind.

There is an indescribably primal exhilaration in the freedom to enact in space what the mind sees in ideas. In the mock physical battle, strengths prevail, whether of mind, spirit, or body. The mesmerizing exchange of attacks and spectacular defenses induces an almost trance-like state in both observers and the observed. *Capoeira* can be considered a dance because of its aesthetic, a fight because of its violence, or a sport because of its athleticism.

But it is, above all, a game.

Capoeira is currently being offered in the Philippines for the first time at Centro Flamenco by Grupo Capoeira Manila, and the Escola Brasileira de Capoeira. Call (0917) 359-8318

Burn that fat and stay slim for good

INSIDE OUT
Cory Quirino

When all else fails, abide by the golden rule: eat only when needed

CAN you reach your ideal weight and stay that way for good? Definitely. But to succeed at this, one must have a low-fat diet, exercise regularly and consume the right fat burners.

Diet guidelines

While every body type requires a stay-slim regimen tailor-fitted to individual needs, there are basic guidelines to follow.

Keep fat intake at a minimum. Trim the fat off pork and beef. Remove the skin from chicken. While a little bit of fat is needed for healthy cell development, too much of it isn't good for you. Make your cooking habits more heart-friendly. Steam, broil, grill and boil more than fry.

Cut down on baked goodies, chocolates and candies. And avoid midnight snack of cakes and pastries. Add more natural sugar to your menu such as fresh fruits. And no matter how you look at it, sugar is sugar whether it is white, brown or honey.

Yet somehow, honey may seem less criminal as it does have some minor health benefits.

Go easy on the salt. Try to use more herbs for flavoring.

Increase your vegetable intake. Have more helpings of greens.

Moderate your arbohydrates. While carbo will turn to sugar in your bloodstream, it has health benefits. However, complex carbo is preferred over simple carbo. So eat more potatoes, legumes, red rice and wheat pasta rather than bread, white rice and white pasta. Modest servings of carbo are preferred over generous helpings. And no refills, please.

Exercise to stay slim. A serious weight loss program requires at least three visits to the gym weekly. Enroll in cardio strength-training classes. If you can't find the time, brisk walk daily for 30 minutes.

Fat burners

Prescription diet pills or against natural diet aids? Here are some natural formulas:

Ephedra (*ma huan*). It's an herb that contains ephedrine, known to suppress the appetite. Caffeine is sometimes used in combinations with ephedra, green tea, guarana and yerba mate to remove fat from the body.

Dosage: 72 mg ephedrine daily with guarana

Warning: Ephedrine intake should not exceed 100 mg daily.

Side effects: Nervousness, sleeplessness, jitters, elevated blood pressure, irritability.

Ephedra isn't recommended to everyone. It's not for long-term use. Do not take this supplement if you are sensitive to caffeine. Consult your doctor first.

There are alternatives to ephedra. There are ephedra-free supplements which contain bitter-orange (a Chinese fruit named *zhi shi*) whose active ingredient is synephrine, an appetite suppressant that speeds up the metabolism.

Dosage: 200-600 mg daily

Side effects: Elevated blood pressure

But don't use this product if you have an irregular heartbeat, glaucoma or high blood pressure.

HCA. Hydroxy citric acid is an extract from the rind of an Asian citrus fruit that short-circuits the action of an enzyme involved in converting sugar to fat.

Gymnena Sylvestre. It's from the leaves of a tree native to India. It successfully blocks your taste for sweets.

Green tea. It's an antioxidant rich in caffeine that revs up metabolism. You may take it as a tea equivalent to 50mg/cup, 90 mg, three times a day.

Side effects: Sleeplessness, irritability, irregular heart beat, nervousness.

Carnitine. A popular ingredient in fat-burning formulas. Take 3-4 g daily. No known side effects if recommended dosage is followed.

Chromium picolinate. Helps reduce fat. Take 400-600 mcg daily. If taken in the recommended dosage, no known side effects.

CoQ10. Boosts metabolism. Take 50-150 mg daily. No known side effects.

HBM (Hydroxy Beta-Methylbutyrate). It should be combined with a strength training program. Take 1.5-3 g daily. No known side effects.

Pyruvate. Fat fighter. No known side effects. Take 6 g daily.

Cayenne. A natural spice that has a gentle effect on metabolism. Take ¼ tsp in a cup of hot water three times daily. Add a dash or two on your meals.

Spirulina. This natural food supplement extracted from algae if taken 1 hour-30 minutes before meals suppresses the appetite.

Ginger. Three cups of ginger daily ought to raise your body temperature and cleanse your system.

Thyroid stimulators

When thyroid hormone levels drop, metabolism is affected, thus slowing down fat-burning.

Guggul. An extract from the sap of an Indian tree stimulates the production of thyroid hormones and lowers cholesterol.

Dosage: 25 mg, three times daily.

Caution: See your physician first.

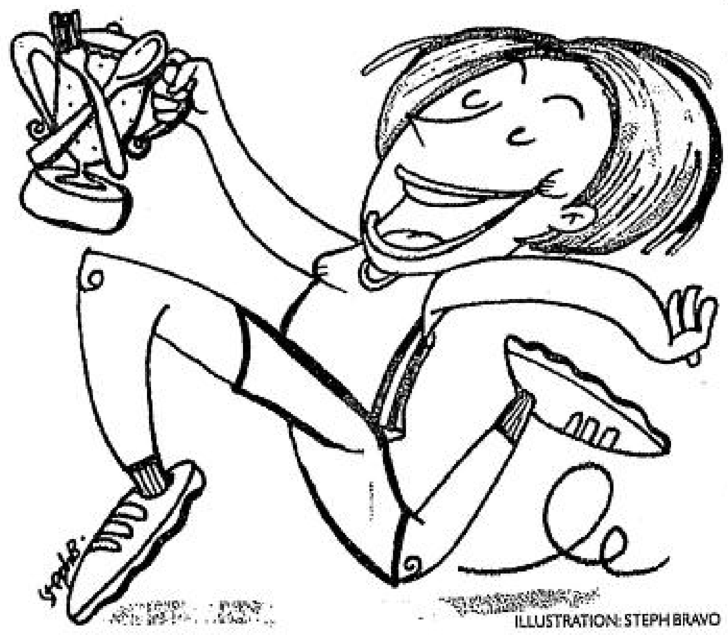


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Fat-burning fats

MCT. Medium-chain triglyceride oil promotes thermogenesis (the speed your body burns fat). Take 1-2 tbsp as a salad dressing. Do not heat or cook. Not to be taken if you have liver disease or diabetes.

CLA. Congregated linoleic acid stimulates breakdown of fats. It is naturally found in poultry, eggs, beef, corn oil and dairy. Take 3-4 g a day.

Water therapy

An ancient natural remedy is to take a glass of tepid water with ¼ tsp of apple cider vinegar upon waking up in the morning. Take another glass one hour before meals. This ought to diminish your food cravings and appetite and boost your immune system.

Zip your mouth

When all else fails, there is a sensible way to lose weight: Eat only when you are hungry. In short, eat less. You will live longer.

Slimming soak bath

The next best thing to swimming in the sea is filling your tub with sea water and fresh seaweeds. Wrap those green slimy tendrils around your waist. A good 10-minute soak should make your own skin feel tighter. If this is too messy, call up your favorite spa and ask for their seaweed specials.

Visualization

Stand before a mirror each day and declare "I am getting slimmer and more attractive everyday." As in any endeavor, the main ingredient for success is faith. Believe in yourself. Because if you don't, nobody else will.

Some information excerpted from "Fat Burner Basics" by Maggie Greenwood-Robinson, Ph.D., Let's Live magazine, October 2002